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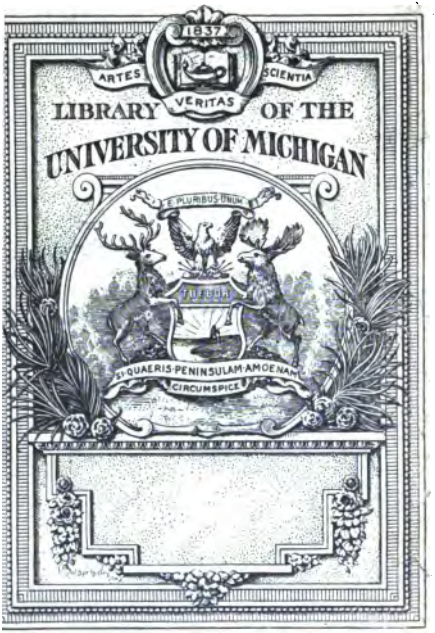
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POEMS,

BY

WILLIAM COWPER,

Of the Inner Temple, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Sicut aquæ tremulum labris ubi lumen ahenis
Sole repercussum, aut radiantis imagine lunæ,
Omnia pervolitat late loca, jamque sub auras
Erigitur, summique ferit laquearia tecti.
Virg. Æn. viii.
So water, trembling in a polished vase,
Reflects the beam that plays upon its face;
The sportive light, uncertain where it falls,
Now strikes the roof, now flashes on the walls.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

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TABLE TALK.

Si te fortè meæ gravis uret sarcina chartæ,
Abjicito.——————HOR. Lib. 1. Epiſt. 13.

A. You told me, I remember, glory, built
On ſelfiſh principles, is ſhame and guilt;
The deeds, that men admire as half divine,
Stark naught, becauſe corrupt in their deſign.
Strange doctrine this! that without ſcruple tears
The laurel, that the very lightning ſpares;
Brings down the warrior's trophy to the duſt,
And eats into his bloody ſword like ruſt.

B. I grant that, men continuing what they are,
Fierce, avaricious, proud, there muſt be war.
And never meant the rule ſhould be applied
To him, that fights with juſtice on his ſide.
Let laurels, drench'd in pure Parnaſſian dews,
Reward his mem'ry, dear to every muſe,

Who, with a courage of unſhaken root,
In honour's field advancing his firm foot,
Plants it upon the line that juſtice draws,
And will prevail or periſh in her cauſe.
'Tis to the virtues of ſuch men, man owes
His portion in the good, that heaven beſtows.
And when recording hiſtory diſplays
Deeds of renown, though wrought in ancient days,
Tells of a few ſtout hearts, that fought and died
Where duty placed them, at their country's ſide;
The man, that is not moved with what he reads,
That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,
Unworthy of the bleſſings of the brave,
Is baſe in kind, and born to be a ſlave.
  But let eternal infamy purſue
The wretch to nought but his ambition true,
Who, for the ſake of filling with one blaſt
The poſt-horns of all Europe, lays her waſte.
Think yourſelf ſtationed on a towering rock,
To ſee a people ſcattered like a flock,
Some royal maſtiff panting at their heels,
With all the ſavage thirſt a tyger feels;
Then view him ſelf-proclaimed in a gazette
Chief monſter that has plagued the nations yet.
The globe and ſceptre in ſuch hands miſplaced,
Thoſe enſigns of dominion, how diſgraced!

The glaſs, that bids man mark the fleeting hour,
And death's own ſcythe would better ſpeak his power;
Then grace the bony phantom in their ſtead
With the king's ſhoulder-knot and gay cockade;
Clothe the twin brethren in each other's dreſs,
The ſame their occupation and ſucceſs.

A. 'Tis your belief the world was made for man;
Kings do but reaſon on the ſelf-ſame plan:
Maintaining your's, you cannot their's condemn,
Who think, or ſeem to think, man made for them.

B. Seldom, alas! the power of logic reigns
With much ſufficiency in royal brains;
Such reaſoning falls like an inverted cone,
Wanting it's proper baſe to ſtand upon.
Man made for kings! thoſe optics are but dim,
That tell you ſo—ſay, rather, they for him.
That were indeed a king-ennobling thought,
Could they, or would they, reaſon as they ought.
The diadem, with mighty projects lined
To catch renown by ruining mankind,
Is worth, with all its gold and glittering ſtore,
Juſt what the toy will ſell for, and no more.

Oh! bright occaſions of diſpenſing good,
How ſeldom uſed, how little underſtood!
To pour in virtue's lap her juſt reward,
Keep vice reſtrained behind a double guard;

To quell the faction, that affronts the throne,
By ſilent magnanimity alone;
To nurſe with tender care the thriving arts,
Watch ev'ry beam philoſophy imparts;
To give religion her unbridled ſcope,
Nor judge by ſtatute a believer's hope;
With cloſe fidelity and love unfeign'd
To keep the matrimonial bond unſtain'd;
Covetous only of a virtuous praiſe;
His life a leſſon to the land he ſways;
To touch the ſword with conſcientious awe,
Nor draw it but when duty bids him draw;
To ſheath it in the peace-reſtoring cloſe
With joy beyond what victory beſtows;
Bleſt country, where theſe kingly glories ſhine;
Bleſt England, if this happineſs be thine!

A. Guard what you ſay; the patriotic tribe
Will ſneer and charge you with a bribe.—*B.* A bribe?
The worth of his three kingdoms I defy,
To lure me to the baſeneſs of a lie.
And, of all lies, (be that one poet's boaſt)
The lie that flatters I abhor the moſt.
Thoſe arts be their's, who hate his gentle reign,
But he that loves him has no need to feign.

A. Your ſmooth eulogium to one crown addreſs'd,
Seems to imply a cenſure on the reſt.

B. Quevedo, as he tells his ſober tale,
Aſk'd, when in hell, to ſee the royal jail;
Approv'd their method in all other things:
But where, good ſir, do you confine your kings?
There—ſaid his guide—the group is full in view.
Indeed?—replied the Don—there are but few.
His black interpreter the charge diſdain'd—
Few, fellow?—there are all that ever reign'd.
Wit, undiſtinguiſhing, is apt to ſtrike
The guilty and not guilty both alike:
I grant the ſarcaſm is too ſevere,
And we can readily refute it here;
While Alfred's name, the father of his age,
And the Sixth Edward's grace th' hiſtoric page.

A. Kings then at laſt have but the lot of all.
By their own conduct they muſt ſtand or fall.

B. True. While they live, the courtly laureat pays
His quit-rent ode, his pepper-corn of praiſe;
And many a dunce whoſe fingers itch to write,
Adds, as he can, his tributary mite:
A ſubject's faults a ſubject may proclaim,
A monarch's errors are forbidden game!
Thus free from cenſure, over-aw'd by fear,
And prais'd for virtues, that they ſcorn to wear,
The fleeting forms of majeſty engage
Reſpect, while ſtalking o'er life's narrow ſtage;

Then leave their crimes for hiſtory to ſcan,
And aſk with buſy ſcorn, Was this the man?
I pity kings, whom worſhip waits upon
Obſequious from the cradle to the throne;
Before whoſe infant eyes the flatterer bows,
And binds a wreath about their baby brows;
Whom education ſtiffens into ſtate,
And death awakens from that dream too late.
Oh! if ſervility with ſupple knees,
Whoſe trade it is to ſmile, to crouch, to pleaſe;
If ſmooth diſſimulation, ſkilled to grace
A devil's purpoſe with an angel's face;
If ſmiling peereſſes, and ſimpering peers,
Encompaſſing his throne a few ſhort years;
If the gilt carriage and the pampered ſteed,
That wants no driving, and diſdains the lead;
If guards, mechanically formed in ranks,
Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks,
Shouldering and ſtanding as if ſtuck to ſtone,
While condeſcending majeſty looks on;
If monarchy conſiſt in ſuch baſe things,
Sighing, I ſay again, I pity kings!
To be ſuſpected, thwarted, and withſtood,
Even when he labours for his country's good;
To ſee a band, called patriot for no cauſe,
But that they catch at popular applauſe,

Careleſs of all the anxiety he feels,
Hook diſappointment on the public wheels;
With all their flippant fluency of tongue,
Moſt confident, when palpably moſt wrong;
If this be kingly, then farewell for me
All kingſhip; and may I be poor and free!

To be the Table Talk of clubs up ſtairs,
To which the unwaſhed artificer repairs,
To indulge his genius after long fatigue,
By diving into cabinet intrigue;
(For what kings deem a toil, as well they may,
To him is relaxation and mere play)
To win no praiſe when well-wrought plans prevail,
But to be rudely cenſured when they fail;
To doubt the love his favourites may pretend,
And in reality to find no friend;
If he indulge a cultivated taſte,
His galleries with the works of art well graced,
To hear it called extravagance and waſte;
If theſe attendants, and if ſuch as theſe,
Muſt follow royalty, then welcome eaſe;
However humble and confined the ſphere,
Happy the ſtate, that has not theſe to fear.

A. Thus men, whoſe thoughts contemplative have dwelt
On ſituations, that they never felt,

Start up ſagacious, covered with the duſt
Of dreaming ſtudy and pedantic ruſt,
And prate and preach about what others prove,
As if the world and they were hand and glove.
Leave kingly backs to cope with kingly cares;
They have their weight to carry, ſubjects their's;
Poets, of all men, ever leaſt regret
Increaſing taxes and the nation's debt.
Could you contrive the payment, and rehearſe
The mighty plan, oracular, in verſe,
No bard, howe'er majeſtic, old or new,
Should claim my fixt attention more than you.

B. Not Brindley nor Bridgewater would eſſay
To turn the courſe of Helicon that way;
Nor would the Nine conſent the ſacred tide
Should purl amidſt the traffic of Cheapſide,
Or tinkle in 'Change Alley, to amuſe
The leathern ears of ſtock-jobbers and jews.

A. Vouchſafe, at leaſt, to pitch the key of rhyme
To themes more pertinent, if leſs ſublime.
When miniſters and miniſterial arts;
Patriots, who love good places at their hearts;
When admirals, extoll'd for ſtanding ſtill,
Or doing nothing with a deal of ſkill;
Gen'rals, who will not conquer when they may,
Firm friends to peace, to pleaſure, and good pay;

When freedom, wounded almoſt to deſpair,
Though diſcontent alone can find out where;
When themes like theſe employ the poet's tongue,
I hear as mute as if a ſyren ſung.
Or tell me, if you can, what pow'r maintains
A Britain's ſcorn of arbitrary chains?
That were a theme might animate the dead,
And move the lips of poets caſt in lead.

B. The cauſe, tho' worth the ſearch, may yet elude
Conjecture and remark, however ſhrewd.
They take perhaps a well-directed aim,
Who ſeek it in his climate and his frame.
Lib'ral in all things elſe, yet nature here
With ſtern ſeverity deals out the year.
Winter invades the ſpring, and often pours
A chilling flood on ſummer's drooping flow'rs;
Unwelcome vapours quench autumnal beams,
Ungenial blaſts attending curl the ſtreams:
The peaſants urge their harveſt, ply the fork
With double toil, and ſhiver at their work;
Thus with a rigour, for his good deſign'd
She rears her fav'rite man of all mankind.
His form robuſt and of elaſtic tone,
Proportion'd well, half muſcle and half bone,
Supplies with warm activity and force
A mind well-lodg'd, and maſculine of courſe.

Hence liberty, ſweet liberty inſpires
And keeps alive his fierce but noble fires.
Patient of conſtitutional controul,
He bears it with meek manlineſs of ſoul;
But, if authority grow wanton, woe
To him that treads upon his free-born toe;
One ſtep beyond the boundary of the laws
Fires him at once in freedom's glorious cauſe.
Thus proud prerogative, not much revered,
Is ſeldom felt, though ſometimes ſeen and heard;
And in his cage, like parrot fine and gay,
Is kept to ſtrut, look big, and talk away.
Born in a climate ſofter far than our's,
Not formed like us, with ſuch Heroulean powers,
The Frenchman, eaſy, debonnair and briſk,
Give him his laſs, his fiddle, and his friſk,
Is always happy, reign whoever may,
And laughs the ſenſe of miſery far away.
He drinks his ſimple beverage with a guſt;
And, feaſting on an onion and a cruſt,
We never feel the alacrity and joy,
With which he ſhouts and carols *Vive le Roy*,
Filled with as much true merriment and glee,
As if he heard his king ſay—Slave, be free.
Thus happineſs depends, as nature ſhows,
Leſs on exterior things than moſt ſuppoſe.

Vigilant over all that he has made,
Kind Providence attends with gracious aid;
Bids equity throughout his works prevail,
And weighs the nations in an even ſcale;
He can encourage ſlavery to a ſmile,
And fill with diſcontent a Britiſh iſle.

A. Freeman and ſlave then, if the caſe be ſuch,
Stand on a level; and you prove too much:
If all men indiſcriminately ſhare
His foſtering power, and tutelary care,
As well be yoked by deſpotiſm's hand,
As dwell at large in Britain's chartered land.

B. No. Freedom has a thouſand charms to ſhow,
That ſlaves, howe'er contented, never know.
The mind attains beneath her happy reign
The growth, that nature meant ſhe ſhould attain;
The varied fields of ſcience, ever new,
Opening and wider opening on her view,
She ventures onward with a proſperous force,
While no baſe fear impedes her in her courſe.
Religion, richeſt favour of the ſkies,
Stands moſt revealed before the freeman's eyes;
No ſhades of ſuperſtition blot the day,
Liberty chaſes all that gloom away;
The ſoul emancipated, unoppreſſed,
Free to prove all things and hold faſt the beſt,

Learns much ; and to a thouſand lift'ning minds
Communicates with joy the good ſhe finds :
Courage in arms, and ever prompt to ſhow
His manly forehead to the fierceſt foe ;
Glorious in war, but for the ſake of peace,
His ſpirits riſing as his toils increaſe,
Guards well what arts and induſtry have won,
And freedom claims him for her firſt-born ſon.
Slaves fight for what were better caſt away—
The chain that binds them, and a tyrant's ſway ;
But they, that fight for freedom, undertake
The nobleſt cauſe mankind can have at ſtake :—
Religion, virtue, truth, whate'er we call
A bleſſing—freedom is the pledge of all.
Oh liberty ! the priſ'ner's pleaſing dream,
The poet's muſe, his paſſion and his theme ;
Genius is thine, and thou art fancy's nurſe ;
Loſt without thee th' ennobling pow'rs of verſe ;
Heroic ſong from thy free touch acquires
Its cleareſt tone, the rapture it inſpires :
Place me, where winter breathes his keeneſt air,
And I will ſing, if liberty be there ;
And I will ſing at liberty's dear feet,
In Afric's torrid clime, or India's fierceſt heat.

A. Sing where you pleaſe ; in ſuch a cauſe I grant
An Engliſh poet's privilege to rant ;

But is not freedom—at leaſt is not our's
Too apt to play the wanton with her pow'rs,
Grow freakiſh, and o'erleaping every mound,
Spread anarchy and terror all around?

B. Agreed. But would you ſell or ſlay your horſe
For bounding and curvetting in his courſe;
Or if, when ridden with a careleſs rein,
He break away, and ſeek the diſtant plain?
No. His high mettle, under good controul,
Gives him Olympic ſpeed, and ſhoots him to the goal.
Let diſcipline employ her wholeſome arts;
Let magiſtrates alert perform their parts,
Not ſkulk or put on a prudential maſk,
As if their duty were a deſp'rate taſk;
Let active laws apply the needful curb
To guard the peace, that riot would diſturb;
And liberty, preſerved from wild exceſs,
Shall raiſe no feuds for armies to ſuppreſs.
When tumult lately burſt his priſon door,
And ſet plebeian thouſands in a roar;
When he uſurp'd authority's juſt place,
And dared to look his maſter in the face;
When the rude rabble's watch-word was—deſtroy,
And blazing London ſeem'd a ſecond Troy;
Liberty bluſh'd, and hung her drooping head,
Beheld their progreſs with the deepeſt dread;

Bluſhed, that effects like theſe ſhe ſhould produce,
Worſe than the deeds of galley-ſlaves broke looſe.
She loſes in ſuch ſtorms her very name,
And fierce licentiouſneſs ſhould bear the blame.
Incomparable gem! thy worth untold;
Cheap though blood-bought; and thrown away when
ſold,
May no foes raviſh thee, and no falſe friend
Betray thee, while profeſſing to defend;
Prize it ye miniſters; ye monarchs, ſpare;
Ye patriots, guard it with a miſer's care.

A. Patriots, alas! the few that have been found,
Where moſt they flouriſh, upon Engliſh ground,
The country's need have ſcantily ſupplied,
And the laſt left the ſcene, when Chatham died.

B. Not ſo—the virtue ſtill adorns our age,
Though the chief actor died upon the ſtage,
In him Demoſthenes was heard again;
Liberty taught him her Athenian ſtrain;
She clothed him with authority and awe,
Spoke from his lips, and in his looks gave law.
His ſpeech, his form, his action, full of grace,
And all his country beaming in his face,
He ſtood, as ſome inimitable hand
Would ſtrive to make a Paul or Tully ſtand.
No ſycophant or ſlave, that dared oppoſe
Her ſacred cauſe, but trembled when he roſe;

And every venal ſtickler for the yoke
Felt himſelf cruſhed at the firſt word he ſpoke.
Such men are raiſed to ſtation and command,
When Providence means mercy to a land.
He ſpeaks, and they appear; to him they owe
Skill to direct, and ſtrength to ſtrike the blow;
To manage with addreſs, to ſeize with power
The criſis of a dark deciſive hour.
So Gideon earned a victory not his own;
Subſerviency his praiſe, and that alone.
Poor England! thou art a devoted deer,
Beſet with every ill but that of fear.
The nations hunt; all mark thee for a prey;
They ſwarm around thee, and thou ſtandeſt at bay,
Undaunted ſtill, though wearied and perplexed,
Once Chatham ſaved thee; but who ſaves thee next?
Alas! the tide of pleaſure ſweeps along
All, that ſhould be the boaſt of Britiſh ſong.
'Tis not the wreath, that once adorned thy brow,
The prize of happier times, will ſerve thee now.
Our anceſtry, a gallant chriſtian race,
Patterns of every virtue, every grace,
Confeſſed a God; they kneeled before they fought,
And praiſed him in the victories he wrought.
Now from the duſt of ancient days bring forth
Their ſober zeal, integrity, and worth;

Courage, ungrac'd by theſe, affronts the ſkies,
Is but the fire without the ſacrifice.
The ſtream, that feeds the well-ſpring of the heart,
Not more invigorates life's nobleſt part,
Than virtue quickens with a warmth divine
The powers, that ſin has brought to a decline.

A. Th' ineſtimable eſtimate of Brown
Roſe like a paper-kite, and charmed the town;
But meaſures, plann'd and executed well,
Shifted the wind that rais'd it, and it fell.
He trod the very ſelf-ſame ground you tread,
And victory refuted all he ſaid.

B. And yet his judgment was not fram'd amiſs;
Its error, if it err'd, was merely this—
He thought the dying hour already come,
And a complete recovery ſtruck him dumb.

But that effeminancy, folly, luſt,
Enervate and enfeeble, and needs muſt,
And that a nation ſhamefully debas'd,
Will be deſpis'd and trampled on at laſt.
Unleſs ſweet penitence her pow'rs renew,
Is truth, if hiſtory itſelf be true.
There is a time, and juſtice marks the date,
For long-forbearing clemency to wait;
That hour elaps'd th' incurable revolt
Is puniſhd, and down comes the thunder-bolt.

If mercy *then* put by the threat'ning blow,
Muſt ſhe perform the ſame kind office *now*?
May ſhe! and, if offended heaven be ſtill
Acceſſible, and prayer prevail, ſhe will.
'Tis not however, inſolence and noiſe,
The tempeſt of tumultuary joys,
Nor is it yet deſpondence and diſmay
Will win her viſits or engage her ſtay;
Pray'r only, and the penitential tear,
Can call her ſmiling down, and fix her here.
But when a country, (one that I could name)
In proſtitution ſinks the ſenſe of ſhame;
When infamous venality, grown bold,
Writes on his boſom, *to be let or sold*;
When perjury, that heav'n defying vice,
Sells oaths by tale, and at the loweſt price,
Stamps God's own name upon a lie juſt made,
To turn a penny in the way of trade;
When avarice ſtarves (and never hides his face)
Two or three millions of the human race,
And not a tongue inquires, how, where, or when,
Though conſcience will have twinges now and then;
When profanation of the ſacred cauſe
In all its parts, times, miniſtry, and laws,
Beſpeaks a land, once chriſtian, fall'n, and loſt,
In all, that wars againſt that title moſt;

What follows next let cities of great name,
And regions long ſince deſolate proclaim.
Nineveh, Babylon, and ancient Rome,
Speak to the preſent times, and times to come;
They cry aloud in every careleſs ear,
Stop, while ye may; ſuſpend your mad career;
O learn from our example and our fate,
Learn wiſdom and repentance ere too late.
Not only vice diſpoſes and prepares
The mind, that ſlumbers ſweetly in her ſnares,
To ſtoop to tyranny's uſurped command,
And bend her poliſhed neck beneath his hand,
(A dire effect, by one of nature's laws
Unchangeably connected with its cauſe);
But Providence himſelf will intervene
To throw his dark diſpleaſure over the ſcene.
All are his inſtruments; each form of war,
What burns at home, or threatens from afar,
Nature in arms, her elements at ſtrife,
The ſtorms, that overſet the joys of life,
Are but his rods to ſcourge a guilty land,
And waſte it at the bidding of his hand.
He gives the word, and mutiny ſoon roars
In all her gates, and ſhakes her diſtant ſhores;
The ſtandards of all nations are unfurled;
She has one foe, and that one foe the world.

And, if he doom that people with a frown,
And mark them with a ſeal of wrath preſſed down,
Obduracy takes place; callous and tough,
The reprobated race grows judgment proof:
Earth ſhakes beneath them, and heaven roars above;
But nothing ſcares them from the courſe they love.
To the laſcivious pipe and wanton ſong,
That charm down fear, they frolic it along,
With mad rapidity and unconcern,
Down to the gulph, from which is no return.
They truſt in navies, and their navies fail—
God's curſe can caſt away ten thouſand ſail!
They truſt in armies, and their courage dies;
In wiſdom, wealth, in fortune, and in lies;
But all they truſt in withers, as it muſt,
When He commands, in whom they place no truſt.
Vengeance at laſt pours down upon their coaſt
A long deſpiſed, but now victorious, hoſt;
Tyranny ſends the chain, that muſt abridge
The noble ſweep of all their privilege;
Gives liberty the laſt, the mortal ſhock:
Slips the ſlave's collar on, and ſnaps the lock.

A. Such lofty ſtrains embelliſh what you teach,
Mean you to propheſy, or but to preach?

B. I know the mind, that feels indeed the fire
The muſe imparts, and can command the lyre.

Acts with a force, and kindles with a zeal,
Whate'er the theme, that others never feel.
If human woes her ſoft attention claim,
A tender ſympathy pervades the frame,
She pours a ſenſibility divine
Along the nerve of ev'ry feeling line.
But if a deed not tamely to be born
Fire indignation and a ſenſe of ſcorn,
The ſtrings are ſwept with ſuch a pow'r ſo loud,
The ſtorm of muſic ſhakes th' aſtoniſh'd crowd.
So, when remote futurity is brought
Before the keen inquiry of her thought,
A terrible ſagacity informs
The poet's heart; he looks to diſtant ſtorms;
He hears the thunder ere the tempeſt low'rs;
And arm'd with ſtrength ſurpaſſing human pow'rs,
Seizes events as yet unknown to man,
And darts his ſoul into the dawning plan.
Hence, in a Roman mouth, the graceful name
Of prophet and of poet was the ſame;
Hence Britiſh poets too the prieſthood ſhar'd,
And every hallowed druid was a bard.
But no prophetic fires to me belong;
I play with ſyllables, and ſport in ſong.

A. At Weſtminſter, where little poets ſtrive
To ſet a diſtich upon ſix and five,

Where diſcipline helps op'ning buds of ſenſe,
And makes his pupils proud with ſilver-pence,
I was a poet too: but modern taſte
Is ſo refin'd, and delicate, and chaſte,
That verſe, whatever fire the fancy warms,
Without a creamy ſmoothneſs has no charms.
Thus, all ſucceſs depending on an ear,
And thinking I might purchaſe it too dear,
If ſentiment were ſacrific'd to ſound,
And truth cut ſhort to make a period round,
I judg'd a man of ſenſe would ſcarce do worſe,
Than caper in the morris-dance of verſe.

B. Thus reputation is a ſpur to wit,
And ſome wits flag through fear of loſing it.
Give me the line, that ploughs its ſtately courſe
Like a proud ſwan, conq'ring the ſtream by force;
That, like ſome cottage beauty, ſtrikes the heart,
Quite unindebted to the tricks of art.
When labour and when dulneſs, club in hand,
Like the two figures at St. Dunſtan's ſtand,
Beating alternately, in meaſur'd time,
The clock-work tintinabulum of rhime,
Exact and regular the ſounds will be;
But ſuch mere quarter-ſtrokes are not for me.

From him, who rears a poem lank and long,
To him who ſtrains his all into a ſong;

Language, above all teaching, or, if taught,
Only by gratitude and glowing thought,
Elegant as ſimplicity, and warm
As ecſtaſy, unmanacled by form,
Not prompted, as in our degen'rate days,
By low ambition and the thirſt of praiſe,
Was natural as is the flowing ſtream,
And yet magnificent—A God the theme
That theme on earth exhauſted, though above
'Tis found as everlaſting as his love,
Man laviſh'd all his thoughts on human things—
The feats of heroes, and the wrath of kings:
But ſtill, while virtue kindled his delight,
The ſong was moral, and ſo far was right.
'Twas thus till luxury ſeduced the mind
To joys leſs innocent, as leſs refin'd;
Then genius danc'd a bacchanal; he crown'd
The brimming goblet, ſeiz'd the thyrſus, bound
His brows with ivy, ruſh'd into the field,
Of wild imagination, and there reel'd,
The victim of his own laſcivious fires,
And dizzy with delight, profan'd the ſacred wires.
Anacreon, Horace play'd in Greece and Rome
This bedlam part; and others nearer home.
When Cromwell fought for pow'r, and while he reign'd
The proud protector of the pow'r he gain'd,

Religion harſh, intolerant, auſtere,
Parent of manners like herſelf ſevere,
Drew a rough copy of the Chriſtian face
Without the ſmile, the ſweetneſs, or the grace;
The dark and ſullen humour of the time
Judged every effort of the muſe a crime;
Verſe, in the fineſt mould of fancy caſt,
Was lumber in an age ſo void of taſte:
But when the ſecond Charles aſſumed the ſway,
And arts revived beneath a ſofter day,
Then, like a bow long forced into a curve,
The mind, releaſed from too conſtrained a nerve,
Flew to its firſt poſition with a ſpring,
That made the vaulted roofs of pleaſure ring.
His court, the diſſolute and hateful ſchool
Of wantonneſs, where vice was taught by rule,
Swarmed with a ſcribbling herd, as deep inlaid
With brutal luſt as ever Circe made.
From theſe a long ſucceſſion, in the rage
Of rank obſcenity, debauched their age;
Nor ceaſed, till, ever anxious to redreſs
The abuſes of her ſacred charge, the preſs,
The muſe inſtructed a well-nurtured train
Of abler votaries to cleanſe the ſtain,
And claim the palm for purity of ſong,
That lewdneſs had uſurped and worn ſo long.

Then decent pleaſantry and ſterling ſenſe,
That neither gave nor would endure offence,
Whipped out of ſight, with ſatire juſt and keen,
The puppy pack that had defiled the ſcene.
In front of theſe came Addiſon. In him
Humour in holiday and ſightly trim,
Sublimity and attic taſte, combined,
To poliſh, furniſh, and delight, the mind.
Then Pope, as harmony itſelf exact,
In verſe well diſciplined, complete, compact,
Gave virtue and morality a grace,
That, quite eclipſing pleaſure's painted face,
Levied a tax of wonder and applauſe,
Even on the fools that trampled on their laws.
But he (his muſical fineſſe was ſuch,
So nice his ear, ſo delicate his touch)
Made poetry a mere mechanic art;
And every warbler has his tune by heart.
Nature imparting her ſatiric gift,
Her ſerious mirth, to Arbuthnot and Swift,
With droll ſobriety they raiſed a ſmile
At folly's coſt, themſelves unmoved the while.
That conſtellation ſet, the world in vain
Muſt hope to look upon their like again.
A. Are we then left—*B.* Not wholly in the dark;
Wit now and then, ſtruck ſmartly, ſhows a ſpark,

Sufficient to redeem the modern race
From total night and abſolute diſgrace.
While ſervile trick and imitative knack
Confine the million in the beaten track,
Perhaps ſome courſer who diſdains the road,
Snuffs up the wind, and flings himſelf abroad.
Contemporaries all ſurpaſſed, ſee one;
Short his career, indeed, but ably run;
Churchill; himſelf unconſcious of his powers,
In penury conſumed his idle hours;
And, like a ſcattered ſeed at random ſown,
Was left to ſpring by vigour of his own.
Lifted at length, by dignity of thought
And dint of genius, to an affluent lot,
He laid his head in luxury's ſoft lap,
And took, too often, there his eaſy nap.
If brighter beams than all he threw not forth,
'Twas negligence in him, not want of worth.
Surly and ſlovenly, and bold and coarſe,
Too proud for art, and truſting in mere force,
Spendthrift alike of money and of wit,
Always at ſpeed, and never drawing bit,
He ſtruck the lyre in ſuch a careleſs mood,
And ſo diſdained the rules he underſtood,
The laurel ſeemed to wait on his command,
He ſnatched it rudely from the muſe,' ha d.

Nature, exerting an unwearied power,
Forms, opens, and gives ſcent to, every flower;
Spreads the freſh verdure of the field, and leads
The dancing Naiads through the dewy meads:
She fills profuſe ten thouſand little throats
With muſic, modulating all their notes;
And charms the woodland ſcenes, and wilds unknown,
With artleſs airs and concerts of her own:
But ſeldom (as if fearful of expenſe)
Vouchſafes to man a poet's juſt pretence—
Fervency, freedom, fluency of thought,
Harmony, ſtrength, words exquiſitely ſought;
Fancy, that from the bow, that ſpans the ſky,
Brings colours, dipt in heaven, that never die;
A ſoul exalted above earth, a mind
Skilled in the characters that form mankind;
And, as the ſun in riſing beauty dreſſed,
Looks to the weſtward from the dappled eaſt,
And marks, whatever clouds may interpoſe,
Ere yet his race begins, its glorious cloſe;
An eye like his to catch the diſtant goal;
Or, ere the wheels of verſe begin to roll,
Like his to ſhed illuminating rays
On every ſcene and ſubject it ſurveys:
Thus graced, the man aſſerts a poet's name,
And the world cheerfully admits the claim.

Pity religion has ſo ſeldom found
A ſkilful guide into poetic ground!
The flowers would ſpring wherever ſhe deigned to ſtray,
And every muſe attend her in her way.
Virtue indeed meets many a rhiming friend,
And many a compliment politely penned;
But, unattired in that becoming veſt
Religion weaves for her, and half undreſſed,
Stands in the deſert, ſhivering and forlorn,
A wintry figure, like a withered thorn.
The ſhelves are full, all other themes are ſped;
Hackneyed and worn to the laſt ſlimſy thread,
Satire has long ſince done his beſt; and curſt
And loathſome ribaldry has done his worſt;
Fancy has ſported all her powers away
In tales, in trifles, and in children's play;
And 'tis the ſad complaint, and almoſt true,
Whatever we write, we bring forth nothing new.
'Twere new indeed to ſee a bard all fire,
Touched with a coal from heaven, aſſume the lyre,
And tell the world, ſtill kindling as he ſung,
With more than mortal muſic on his tongue,
That He, who died below, and reigns above,
Inſpires the ſong, and that his name is love.
For, after all, if merely to beguile,
By flowing numbers and a flowery ſtyle,

The tædium that the lazy rich endure,
Which now and then ſweet poetry may cure;
Or, if to ſee the name of idle ſelf,
Stamped on the well-bound quarto, grace the ſhelf,
To float a bubble on the breath of fame,
Prompt his endeavour and engage his aim,
Debaſed to ſervile purpoſes of pride,
How are the powers of genius miſapplied!
The gift, whoſe office is the Giver's praiſe,
To trace him in his word, his works, his ways!
Then ſpread the rich diſcovery, and invite
Mankind to ſhare in the divine delight.
Diſtorted from its uſe and juſt deſign,
To make the pitiful poſſeſſor ſhine,
To purchaſe, at the fool-frequented fair
Of vanity, a wreath for ſelf to wear,
Is profanation of the baſeſt kind—
Proof of a trifling and a worthleſs mind.

A. Hail Sternhold, then; and Hopkins, hail!—*B.* Amen.
If flatt'ry, folly, luſt, employ the pen;
If acrimony, ſlander, and abuſe,
Give it a charge to blacken and traduce;
Though Butler's wit, Pope's numbers, Prior's eaſe,
With all that fancy can invent to pleaſe,
Adorn the poliſhed periods as they fall,
One madrigal of their's is worth them all.

A. 'Twould thin the ranks of the poetic tribe,
To daſh the pen through all that you proſcribe.

B. No matter—we could ſhift when they were not;
And ſhould, no doubt, if they were all forgot.

THE

PROGRESS OF ERROR.

Si quid loquar audiendum. HOR. Lib. 4. Od. 2.

SING, muſe (if ſuch a theme, ſo dark, ſo long,
May find a muſe to grace it with a ſong)
By what unſeen and unſuſpected arts
The ſerpent error twines round human hearts;
Tell where ſhe lurks, beneath what flowery ſhades,
That not a glimpſe of genuine light pervades,
The poiſonous, black, inſinuating worm
Succeſsfully conceals her loathſome form.
Take, if ye can, ye careleſs and ſupine,
Counſel and caution from a voice like mine!
Truths, that the theoriſt could never reach,
And obſervation taught me, I would teach.
Not all, whoſe eloquence the fancy fills,
Muſical as the chime of tinkling rills,

Weak to perform, though mighty to pretend,
Can trace her mazy windings to their end;
Diſcern the fraud beneath the ſpecious lure,
Prevent the danger, or preſcribe the cure.
The clear harangue, and cold as it is clear,
Falls ſoporific on the liſtleſs ear;
Like quickſilver, the rhetoric they diſplay
Shines as it runs, but graſped at ſlips away.
Placed for his trial on this buſtling ſtage,
From thoughtleſs youth to ruminating age,
Free in his will to chooſe or to refuſe,
Man may improve the criſis, or abuſe;
Elſe, on the fataliſts unrighteous plan,
Say to what bar amenable were man?
With nought in charge he could betray no truſt;
And, if he fell, would fall becauſe he muſt;
If love reward him, or if vengeance ſtrike,
His recompenſe in both unjuſt alike.
Divine authority within his breaſt
Brings every thought, word, action, to the teſt;
Warns him or prompts, approves him or reſtrains,
As reaſon, or as paſſion, takes the reins.
Heaven from above, and conſcience from within,
Cries in his ſtartled ear—Abſtain from ſin!
The world around ſolicits his deſire,
And kindles in his ſoul a treacherous fire;

While, all his purpoſes and ſteps to guard,
Peace follows virtue as its ſure reward;
And pleaſure brings us ſurely in her train
Remorſe, and ſorrow, and vindictive pain.
Man, thus endued with an elective voice,
Muſt be ſupplied with objects of his choice,
Wherever he turns, enjoyment and delight,
Or preſent, or in proſpect, meet his ſight;
Thoſe open on the ſpot their honeyed ſtore;
Theſe call him loudly to purſuit of more.
His unexhauſted mine the ſordid vice
Avarice ſhows, and virtue is the price.
Her various motives his ambition raiſe—
Power, pomp, and ſplendour, and the thirſt of praiſe;
There beauty wooes him with expanded arms;
Even Bacchanalian madneſs has its charms
Nor theſe alone, whoſe pleaſures leſs refined
Might well alarm the moſt unguarded mind,
Seek to ſupplant his inexperienced youth,
Or lead him devious from the path of truth;
Hourly allurements on his paſſions preſs,
Safe in themſelves, but dangerous in the exceſs.
Hark! how it floats upon the dewy air!
O what a dying, dying cloſe was there!
'Tis harmony from yon ſequeſtered bower,
Sweet harmony, that ſooths the midnight hour!

Long ere the charioteer of day had run
His morning courſe, the enchantment was begun ;
And he ſhall gild yon mountain's height again,
Ere yet the pleaſing toil becomes a pain.
Is this the rugged path, the ſteep aſcent,
That virtue points to ? Can a life thus ſpent
Lead to the bliſs ſhe promiſes the wife,
Detach the ſoul from earth, and ſpeed her to the ſkies
Ye devotees to your adored employ,
Enthuſiaſts, drunk with an unreal joy,
Love makes the muſic of the bleſt above,
Heaven's harmony is univerſal love ;
And earthly ſounds, though ſweet and well combined,
And lenient as ſoft opiates to the mind,
Leave vice and folly unſubdued behind.
Gray dawn appears ; the ſportſman and his train
Speckle the boſom of the diſtant plain ;
'Tis he, the Nimrod of the neighbouring lairs,
Save that his ſcent is leſs acute than their's ;
For perſevering chaſe, and headlong leaps,
True beagle as the ſtauncheſt hound he keeps.
Charged with the folly of his life's mad ſcene,
He takes offence, and wonders what you mean ;
The joy the danger and the toil overpays—
'Tis exerciſe, and health, and length of days.

There ſtand, and juſtify the foul abuſe
Of ſabbath hours with plauſible excuſe;
If apoſtolic gravity be free
To play the fool on Sundays, why not we?
If he the tinkling harpſichord regards
As inoffenſive, what offence in cards?
Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay,
Laymen have leave to dance, if parſons play.
Oh Italy!—Thy ſabbaths will be ſoon
Our ſabbaths, cloſed with mummery and buffoon.
Preaching and pranks will ſhare the motley ſcene,
Our's parcelled out, as thine have ever been,
God's worſhip and the mountebank between.
What ſays the prophet? Let that day be bleſt
With holineſs and conſecrated reſt.
Paſtime and buſineſs both it ſhould exclude,
And bar the door the moment they intrude:
Nobly diſtinguiſhed above all the ſix
By deeds, in which the world muſt never mix.
Hear him again. He calls it a delight,
A day of luxury obſerved aright,
When the glad ſoul is made heaven's welcome gueſt,
Sits banqueting, and God provides the feaſt.
But triflers are engaged and cannot come;
Their anſwer to the call is—*Not at home.*

Oh the dear pleaſures of the velvet plain,
The painted tablets, dealt and dealt again.
Cards with what rapture, and the poliſhed die,
The yawning chaſm of indolence ſupply!
Then to the dance, and make the ſober moon
Witneſs of joys that ſhun the ſight of noon.
Blame, cynic, if you can, quadrille or ball,
The ſnug cloſe party, or the ſplendid hall,
Where night, down-ſtooping from her ebon throne,
Views conſtellations brighter than her own.
'Tis innocent, and harmleſs, and refined,
The balm of care, elyſium of the mind.
Innocent! Oh if venerable time
Slain at the foot of pleaſure be no crime,
Then, with his ſilver beard and magic wand,
Let Comus riſe Archbiſhop of the land;
Let him your rubric and your feaſts preſcribe,
Grand metropolitan of all the tribe.

Of manners rough, and coarſe athletic caſt,
The rank debauch ſuits Clodio's filthy taſte.
Rufillus, exquiſitely formed by rule,
Not of the moral but the dancing ſchool,
Wonders at Clodio's follies, in a tone
As tragical, as others at his own.
He cannot drink five bottles, bilk the ſcore,
Then kill a conſtable, and drink five more;

But he can draw a pattern, make a tart,
And has the ladies etiquette by heart.
Go fool; and, arm in arm with Clodio, plead
Your cauſe before a bar you little dread;
But know, the law, that bids the drunkard die,
Is far too juſt to paſs the trifler by.
Both baby-featured, and of infant ſize,
Viewed from a diſtance, and with heedleſs eyes,
Folly and innocence are ſo alike,
The difference, though eſſential, fails to ſtrike.
Yet folly ever has a vacant ſtare,
A ſimpering countenance, and a trifling air;
But innocence, ſedate, ſerene, erect,
Delights us, by engaging our reſpect.
Man, nature's gueſt by invitation ſweet,
Receives from her both appetite and treat;
But, if he play the glutton and exceed,
His benefactreſs bluſhes at the deed,
For nature, nice, as liberal to diſpenſe,
Made nothing but a brute the ſlave of ſenſe.
Daniel ate pulſe by choice—example rare!
Heaven bleſſed the youth, and made him freſh and fair.
Gorgonius ſits, abdominous and wan,
Like a fat ſquab upon a Chineſe fan:
He ſnuffs far off the anticipated joy;
Turtle and veniſon all his thoughts employ;

Prepares for meals as jockies take a ſweat,
Oh, nauſeous!—an emetic for a whet!
Will Providence overlook the wafted good?
Temperance were no virtue if he could.
That pleaſures, therefore, or what ſuch we call,
Are hurtful, is a truth confeſſed by all.
And ſome, that ſeem to threaten virtue leſs,
Still hurtful in the abuſe, or by the exceſs.
Is man then only for his torment placed
The centre of delights he may not taſte?
Like fabled Tantalus, condemned to hear
The precious ſtream ſtill purling in his ear,
Lip-deep in what he longs for, and yet curſt
With prohibition, and perpetual thirſt?
No, wrangler—deſtitute of ſhame and ſenſe,
The precept, that enjoins him abſtinence,
Forbids him none but the licentious joy,
Whoſe fruit, though fair, tempts only to deſtroy
Remorſe, the fatal egg by pleaſure laid
In every boſom where her neſt is made,
Hatched by the beams of truth denies him reſt,
And proves a raging ſcorpion in his breaſt.
No pleaſure? Are domeſtic comforts dead?
Are all the nameleſs ſweets of friendſhip fled?
Has time worn out, or faſhion put to ſhame,
Good ſenſe, good health, good conſcience, and good fame?

All theſe belong to virtue, and all prove
That virtue has a title to your love.
Have you no touch of pity, that the poor
Stand ſtarved at your inhoſpitable door?
Or if yourſelf too ſcantily ſupplied
Need help, let honeſt induſtry provide.
Earn, if you want; if you abound, impart:
Theſe both are pleaſures to the feeling heart.
No pleaſure? has ſome fickly eaſtern waſte
Sent us a wind to parch us at a blaſt?
Can Britiſh paradiſe no ſcenes afford
To pleaſe her ſated and indifferent lord?
Are ſweet philoſophy's enjoyments run
Quite to the lees? And has religion none?
Brutes capable would tell you 'tis a lie,
And judge you from the kennel and the ſtye.
Delights like theſe, ye ſenſual and profane,
Ye are bid, begged, beſought to entertain;
Called to theſe cryſtal ſtreams, do ye turn off
Obſcene to ſwill and ſwallow at a trough?
Envy the beaſt then, on whom heaven beſtows
Your pleaſures, with no curſes in the cloſe.
  Pleaſure admitted in undue degree
Enſlaves the will, nor leaves the judgment free.
'Tis not alone the grape's enticing juice,
Unnerves the moral powers, and mars their uſe;

Ambition, avarice, and the luſt of fame,
And woman, lovely woman, does the ſame.
The heart, ſurrendered to the ruling power
Of ſome ungoverned paſſion every hour,
Finds by degrees the truths, that once bore ſway,
And all their deep impreſſions, wear away;
So coin grows ſmooth, in traffic current paſſed,
Till Cæſar's image is effaced at laſt.

The breach, though ſmall at firſt, ſoon opening wide,
In ruſhes folly with a full-moon tide,
Then welcome errors of whatever ſize,
To juſtify it by a thouſand lies.
As creeping ivy clings to wood or ſtone,
And hides the ruin that it feeds upon:
So ſophiſtry cleaves cloſe to and protects
Sin's rotten trunk, concealing its defects.
Mortals, whoſe pleaſures are their only care,
Firſt wiſh to be impoſed on, and then are.
And, leſt the fulſome artifice ſhould fail,
Themſelves will hide its coarſeneſs with a veil.
Not more induſtrious are the juſt and true
To give to virtue what is virtue's due—
The praiſe of wiſdom, comelineſs, and worth,
And call her charms to public notice forth—
Than vice's mean and diſingenuous race
To hide the ſhocking features of her face.

Her form with dreſs and lotion they repair;
Then kiſs their idol, and pronounce her fair.
The ſacred implement I now employ
Might prove a miſchief, or at beſt a toy;
A trifle, if it move but to amuſe;
But, if to wrong the judgment and abuſe,
Worſe than a poignard in the baſeſt hand,
It ſtabs at once the morals of a land.
Ye writers of what none with ſafety reads;
Footing it in the dance that fancy leads;
Ye noveliſts, who mar what ye would mend,
Snivelling and drivelling folly without end;
Whoſe correſponding miſſes fill the ream
With ſentimental frippery and dream,
Caught in a delicate ſoft ſilken net
By ſome lewd earl, or rake-hell baronet:
Ye pimps, who, under virtue's fair pretence,
Steal to the cloſet of young innocence,
And teach her, unexperienced yet and green,
To ſcribble as you ſcribbled at fifteen;
Who, kindling a combuſtion of deſire,
With ſome cold moral think to quench the fire;
Though all your engineering proves in vain,
The dribbling ſtream never puts it out again:
Oh that a verſe had power, and could command
Far, far away theſe fleſh-flies of the land;

Who faſten without mercy on the fair,
And ſuck, and leave a craving maggot there.
However diſguiſed the inflammatory tale,
And covered with a fine-ſpun ſpecious veil;
Such writers, and ſuch readers, owe the guſt
And reliſh of their pleaſure all to luſt.

But the muſe, eagle-pinioned, has in view
A quarry more important ſtill than you;
Down, down the wind ſhe ſwims, and ſails away,
Now ſtoops upon it, and now graſps the prey.

Petronius! all the muſes weep for thee;
But every tear ſhall ſcald thy memory:
The graces too, while virtue at their ſhrine
Lay bleeding under that ſoft hand of thine,
Felt each a mortal ſtab in her own breaſt,
Abhorred the ſacrifice, and curſed the prieſt.
Thou poliſhed and high-finiſhed foe to truth,
Gray-beard corrupter of our liſtening youth,
To purge and ſkim away the filth of vice,
That ſo refined it might the more entice,
Then pour it on the morals of thy ſon;
To taint *his* heart, was worthy of *thine own!*
Now, while the poiſon all high life pervades,
Write, if thou canſt, one letter from the ſhades
One, and one only, charged with deep regret
That thy worſe part, thy principles, live yet:

One ſad epiſtle thence may cure mankind
Of the plague ſpread by bundles left behind.
'Tis granted, and no plainer truth appears,
Our moſt important are our earlieſt years;
The mind, impreſſible and ſoft, with eaſe
Imbibes and copies what ſhe hears and ſees,
And through life's lybarinth holds faſt the clue,
That education gives her, falſe or true.
Plants raiſed with tenderneſs are ſeldom ſtrong;
Man's coltiſh diſpoſition aſks the thong;
And without diſcipline the favourite child,
Like a neglected foreſter, runs wild.
But we, as if good qualities would grow
Spontaneous, take but little pains to ſow;
We give ſome Latin, and a ſmatch of Greek;
Teach him to fence and figure twice a week;
And having done, we think, the beſt we can,
Praiſe his proficiency, and dub him man.
From ſchool to Cam or Iſis, and thence home;
And thence with all convenient ſpeed to Rome,
With reverend tutor clad in habit lay,
To teaſe for caſh and quarrel with all day;
With memorandum-book for every town,
And every poſt, and where the chaiſe broke down;
His ſtock, a few french phraſes got by heart,
With much to learn, but nothing to impart,

The youth, obedient to his sire's commands,
Sets off a wanderer into foreign lands.
Surprised at all they meet, the gosling pair
With awkward gait, stretched neck, and silly stare,
Discover huge cathedrals built with stone,
And steeples towering high much like our own;
But show peculiar light by many a grin
At popish practices observed within.

Ere long some bowing, smirking, smart Abbé
Remarks two loiterers, that have lost their way;
And being always primed with *politesse*
For men of their appearance and address,
With much compassion undertakes the task
To tell them more than they have wit to ask:
Points to inscriptions wheresoever they tread,
Such as, when legible, were never read.
But, being cankered now and half worn out,
Craze antiquarian brains with endless doubt;
Some headless hero, or some Cæsar shows—
Defective only in his Roman nose;
Exhibits elevations, drawings, plans,
Models of Herculanean pots and pans;
And sells them medals, which if neither rare
Nor ancient, will be so, preserved with care.

Strange the recital! from whatever cause
His great improvement and new light he draws,

The ſquire, once baſhful, is ſhame-faced no more,
But teems with powers he never felt before:
Whether increaſed momentum, and the force,
With which from clime to clime he ſped his courſe,
(As axles ſometimes kindle as they go)
Chafed him, and brought dull nature to a glow;
Or whether clearer ſkies and ſofter air,
That make Italian flowers ſo ſweet and fair,
Freſhening his lazy ſpirits as he ran,
Unfolded genially and ſpread the man;
Returning he proclaims by many a grace,
By ſhrugs and ſtrange contortions of his face,
How much a dunce, that has been ſent to roam,
Excels a dunce, that has been kept at home.

Accompliſhments have taken virtue's place,
And wiſdom falls before exterior grace:
We ſlight the precious kernel of the ſtone,
And toil to poliſh its rough coat alone.
A juſt deportment, manners graced with eaſe,
Elegant phraſe, and figure formed to pleaſe,
Are qualities, that ſeem to comprehend
Whatever parents, guardians, ſchools, intend;
Hence an unfurniſhed and a liſtleſs mind,
Though buſy, trifling; empty, though refined;
Hence all that interferes, and dares to claſh
With indolence and luxury, is traſh:

While learning, once the man's exclufive pride,
Seems verging faft towards the female fide.
Learning itfelf, received into a mind
By nature weak, or viciouſly inclined,
Serves but to lead philoſophers aſtray,
Where children would with eaſe diſcern the way.
And of all arts ſagacious dupes invent
To cheat themſelves and gain the world's aſſent,
The worſt is—ſcripture warped from its intent.

The carriage bowls along, and all are pleaſed
If Tom be ſober, and the wheels well greaſed;
But if the rogue have gone a cup too far,
Left out his linch-pin, or forgot his tar,
It ſuffers interruption and delay,
And meets with hindrance in the ſmootheſt way.
When ſome hypotheſis abſurd and vain
Has filled with all its fumes a critic's brain,
The text, that ſorts not with his darling whim,
Though plain to others, is obſcure to him.
The will made ſubject to a lawleſs force,
All is irregular and out of courſe;
And judgment drunk, and bribed to loſe his way,
Winks hard, and talks of darkneſs at noon-day.

A critic on the ſacred book ſhould be
Candid and learned, diſpaſſionate and free;

Free from the wayward bias bigots feel,
From fancy's influence, and intemperate zeal:
But above all, (or let the wretch refrain,
Nor touch the page he cannot but profane)
Free from the domineering power of luft;
A lewd interpreter is never juft.

How ſhall I ſpeak thee, or thy power addreſs,
Thou god of our idolatry, the preſs?
By thee religion, liberty, and laws,
Exert their influence, and advance their cauſe;
By thee worſe plagues than Pharaoh's land befel,
Diffuſed, make earth the veſtibule of hell;
Thou fountain, at which drink the good and wiſe;
Thou ever-bubbling ſpring of endleſs lies;
Like Eden's dread probationary tree,
Knowledge of good and evil is from thee.

No wild enthuſiaſt ever yet could reft,
Till half mankind were like himſelf poſſeſſed.
Philoſophers, who darken and put out
Eternal truth by everlaſting doubt;
Church quacks, with paſſions under no command,
Who fill the world with doctrines contraband,
Diſcoverers of they know not what, confined
Within no bounds—the blind that lead the blind;
To ſtreams of popular opinion drawn,
Depoſit in thoſe ſhallows all their ſpawn.

The wriggling fry ſoon fill the creeks around,
Poiſoning the waters where their ſwarms abound.
Scorned by the nobler tenants of the flood,
Minnows and gudgeons gorge the unwholeſome food.
The propagated myriads ſpread ſo faſt,
Even Lewenhoeck himſelf would ſtand aghaſt,
Employed to calculate the enormous ſum,
And own his crab-computing powers overcome.
Is this hyperbole? The world well known,
Your ſober thoughts will hardly find it one.
Freſh confidence the ſpeculatiſt takes
From every hair-brained proſelyte he makes;
And therefore prints. Himſelf but half deceived,
Till others have the ſoothing tale believed.
Hence comment after comment ſpun as fine
As bloated ſpiders draw the flimſy line.
Hence the ſame word, that bids our luſts obey,
Is miſapplied to ſanctify their ſway.
If ſtubborn Greek refuſe to be his friend,
Hebrew or Syriac ſhall be forced to bend:
If languages and copies all cry, No—
Somebody proved it centuries ago.
Like trout purſued, the critic in deſpair
Darts to the mud, and finds his ſafety there:
Women, whom cuſtom has forbid to fly
The ſcholar's pitch, (the ſcholar beſt knows why)

With all the ſimple and unlettered poor,
Admire his learning, and almoſt adore.
Whoever errs, the prieſt can never be wrong,
With ſuch fine words familiar to his tongue.
Ye ladies! (for indifferent in your cauſe,
I ſhould deſerve to forfeit all applauſe)
Whatever ſhocks or gives the leaſt offence
To virtue, delicacy, truth, or ſenſe,
(Try the criterion, 'tis a faithful guide)
Nor has, nor can have, ſcripture on its ſide.
None but an author knows an author's cares,
Or fancy's fondneſs for the child ſhe bears.
Committed once into the public arms,
The baby ſeems to ſmile with added charms.
Like ſomething precious ventured far from ſhore,
'Tis valued for the danger's ſake the more.
He views it with complacency ſupreme,
Solicits kind attention to his dream;
And daily more enamoured of the cheat,
Kneels, and aſks heaven to bleſs the dear deceit.
So one, whoſe ſtory ſerves at leaſt to ſhow
Men loved their own productions long ago,
Wooed an unfeeling ſtatue for his wife,
Nor reſted till the gods had given it life.
If ſome mere driveller ſuck the ſugared fib,
One that ſtill needs his leading ſtring and bib,

And praiſe his genius, he is ſoon repaid
In praiſe applied to the ſame part—his head,
For 'tis a rule, that holds for ever true,
Grant me diſcernment, and I grant it you.
Patient of contradiction as a child,
Affable, humble, diffident, and mild;
Such was ſir Iſaac, and ſuch Boyle and Locke:
Your blunderer is as ſturdy as a rock.
The creature is ſo ſure to kick and bite,
A muleteer's the man to ſet him right.
Firſt appetite enlifts him truth's ſworn foe,
Then obſtinate ſelf-will confirms him ſo.
Tell him he wanders; that his error leads
To fatal ills; that, though the path he treads
Be flowery, and he ſee no cauſe of fear,
Death and the pains of hell attend him there;
In vain; the ſlave of arrogance and pride,
He has no hearing on the prudent ſide.
His ſtill refuted quirks he ſtill repeats;
New raiſed objections with new quibbles meets;
Till, ſinking in the quickſand he defends,
He dies diſputing, and the conteſt ends—
But not the miſchiefs; they, ſtill left behind
Like thiſtle-ſeeds, are ſown by every wind.
Thus men go wrong with an ingenious ſkill;
Bend the ſtraight rule to their own crooked will;

And with a clear and ſhining lamp ſupplied,
Firſt put it out, then take it for a guide.
Halting on crutches of unequal ſize,
One leg by truth ſupported, one by lies;
They fidle to the goal with awkward pace,
Secure of nothing—but to loſe the race.

Faults in the life breed errors in the brain;
And theſe reciprocally thoſe again.
The mind and conduct mutually imprint
And ſtamp their image in each other's mint:
Each, ſire and dam, of an infernal race,
Begetting and conceiving all that's baſe.

None ſends his arrow to the mark in view,
Whoſe hand is feeble, or his aim untrue.
For though, ere yet the ſhaft is on the wing,
Or when it firſt forſakes the elaſtic ſtring,
It err but little from the intended line,
It falls at laſt far wide of his deſign:
So he, who ſeeks a manſion in the ſky,
Muſt watch his purpoſe with a ſtedfaſt eye;
That prize belongs to none but the ſincere,
The leaſt obliquity is fatal here.

With caution taſte the ſweet Circean cup:
He that ſips often, at laſt drinks it up.
Habits are ſoon aſſum'd; but when we ſtrive
To ſtrip them off, 'tis being flayed alive.

Called to the temple of impure delight,
He that abſtains, and he alone, does right.
If a wiſh wander that way, call it home;
He cannot long be ſafe whoſe wiſhes roam.
But, if you paſs the threſhold, you are caught;
Die then, if power Almighty ſave you not.
There hardening by degrees, till double ſteeled,
Take leave of nature's God, and God revealed;
Then laugh at all you trembled at before;
And, joining the free-thinkers brutal roar,
Swallow the two grand noſtrums they diſpenſe—
That ſcripture lies, and blaſphemy is ſenſe.
If clemency revolted by abuſe
Be damnable, then damned without excuſe.
Some dream that they can ſilence, when they will,
The ſtorm of paſſion, and ſay, *Peace, be ſtill*;
But "*Thus far and no farther*," when addreſſed
To the wild wave, or wilder human breaſt,
Implies authority that never can,
That never ought to be the lot of man.
But muſe forbear; long flights forebode a fall;
Strike on the deep-toned chord the ſum of all.
Hear the juſt law—the judgment of the ſkies!
He that hates truth ſhall be the dupe of lies:
And he that *will* be cheated to the laſt,
Deluſions ſtrong as hell ſhall bind him faſt.

But if the wanderer his miſtake diſcern,
Judge his own ways, and ſigh for a return,
Bewildered once, muſt he bewail his loſs
For ever and for ever? No—the croſs!
There and there only (though the deiſt rave,
And atheiſt, if earth bear ſo baſe a ſlave);
There and there only is the power to ſave.
There no deluſive hope invites deſpair;
No mockery meets you, no deception there.
The ſpells and charms, that blinded you before,
All vaniſh there, and faſcinate no more.

I am no preacher, let this hint ſuffice—
The croſs once ſeen is death to every vice:
Elſe he that hung there ſuffered all his pain,
Bled, groaned, and agonized, and died, in vain.

TRUTH.

Pensantur trutinâ. HOR. Lib. II. Epiſt. 1

MAN, on the dubious waves of error toſſed,
His ſhip half foundered, and his compaſs loſt,
Sees, far as human optics may command,
A fleeping fog, and fancies it dry land:
Spreads all his canvaſs, every ſinew plies;
Pants for it, aims at it, enters it, and dies!
Then farewell all ſelf-ſatisfying ſchemes,
His well built ſyſtems, philoſophic dreams;
Deceitful views of future bliſs farewell!
He reads his ſentence at the flames of hell.
Hard lot of man—to toil for the reward
Of virtue, and yet loſe it! Wherefore hard?—
He that would win the race muſt guide his horſe
Obedient to the cuſtoms of the courſe;

Elſe, though unequalled to the goal he flies,
A meaner than himſelf ſhall gain the prize.
Grace leads the right way: if you chooſe the wrong,
Take it and periſh; but reſtrain your tongue;
Charge not, with light ſufficient, and left free,
Your wilful ſuicide on God's decree.

Oh how unlike the complex works of man,
Heaven's eaſy, artleſs, unincumbered plan!
No meretricious graces to beguile,
No cluſtering ornaments to clog the pile;
From oſtentation as from weakneſs free,
It ſtands like the cerulean arch we ſee,
Majeſtic in its own ſimplicity.
Inſcribed above the portal from afar
Conſpicuous as the brightneſs of a ſtar,
Legible only by the light they give,
Stand the ſoul-quickening words—BELIEVE AND LIVE.
Too many, ſhocked at what ſhould charm them moſt,
Deſpiſe the plain direction and are loſt.
Heaven on ſuch terms! (they cry with proud diſdain)
Incredible, impoſſible, and vain!—
Rebel, becauſe 'tis eaſy to obey;
And ſcorn, for its own ſake, the gracious way.
Theſe are the ſober, in whoſe cooler brains
Some thought of immortality remains;

The reſt too buſy or too gay to wait
On the ſad theme, their everlaſting fate,
Sport for a day and periſh in a night,
The foam upon the waters not ſo light.
Who judged the Phariſee? What odious cauſe
Expoſed him to the vengeance of the laws?
Had he ſeduced a virgin, wronged a friend,
Or ſtabbed a man to ſerve ſome private end?
Was blaſphemy his ſin? Or did he ſtray
From the ſtrict duties of the ſacred day?
Sit long and late at the carouſing board?
(Such were the ſins with which he charged his Lord.)
No—the man's morals were exact, what then?
'Twas his ambition to be ſeen of men;
His virtues were his pride; and that one vice
Made all his virtues gewgaws of no price;
He wore them as fine trappings for a ſhow,
A praying, ſynagogue-frequenting, beau.
The ſelf-applauding bird, the peacock ſee—
Mark what a ſumptuous Phariſee is he!
Meridian ſun-beams tempt him to unfold
His radiant glories, azure, green, and gold:
He treads as if, ſome ſolemn muſic near,
His meaſured ſtep were governed by his ear;
And ſeems to ſay—Ye meaner fowl give place,
I am all ſplendour, dignity, and grace!

Not ſo the pheaſant on his charms preſumes,
Though he too has a glory in his plumes.
He, chriſtian like, retreats with modeſt mien
To the cloſe copſe, or far ſequeſtered green,
And ſhines without deſiring to be ſeen.
The plea of works, as arrogant and vain,
Heaven turns from with abhorrence and diſdain;
Not more affronted by avowed neglect,
Than by the mere diſſembler's feigned reſpect.
What is all righteouſneſs that men deviſe?
What—but a ſordid bargain for the ſkies?
But Chriſt as ſoon would abdicate his own,
As ſtoop from heaven to ſell the proud a throne.
His dwelling a receſs in ſome rude rock,
Book, beads, and maple-diſh, his meagre ſtock;
In ſhirt of hair and weeds of canvaſs dreſſed,
Girt with a bell-rope that the pope has bleſsed;
Aduſt with ſtripes told out for every crime,
And ſore tormented long before his time;
His prayer preferred to ſaints that cannot aid;
His praiſe poſtponed, and never to be paid;
See the ſage hermit, by mankind admired,
With all that bigotry adopts inſpired,
Wearing out life in his religious whim,
Till his religious whimſy wears out him.

His works, his abſtinence, his zeal allowed,
You think him humble—God accounts him proud;
High in demand, though lowly in pretence,
Of all his conduct, this the genuine ſenſe—
My penitential ſtripes, my ſtreaming blood,
Have purchaſed heaven, and prove my title good.
Turn eaſtward now, and fancy ſhall apply
To your weak ſight her teleſcopic eye.
The bramin kindles on his own bare head
The ſacred fire, ſelf-torturing his trade,
His voluntary pains, ſevere and long,
Would give a barbarous air to Britiſh ſong;
No grand inquiſitor could worſe invent,
Than he contrives to ſuffer, well content.
Which is the ſaintlier worthy of the two?
Paſt all diſpute, yon anchorite ſay you.
Your ſentence and mine differ. What is a name?
I ſay the bramin has the fairer claim.
If ſufferings, ſcripture no where recommends,
Deviſed by ſelf to anſwer ſelfiſh ends,
Give ſaintſhip, then all Europe muſt agree
Ten ſtarveling hermits ſuffer leſs than he.
The truth is (if the truth may ſuit your ear,
And prejudice have left a paſſage clear)
Pride has attained its moſt luxuriant growth,
And poiſoned every virtue in them both.

Pride may be pampered while the flesh grows lean;
Humility may clothe an English dean;
That grace was Cowper's—his, confessed by all—
Though placed in golden Durham's second stall.
Not all the plenty of a bishop's board,
His palace, and his lacqueys, and "My Lord,"
More nourish pride, that condescending vice,
Than abstinence, and beggary, and lice;
It thrives in misery, and abundant grows
In misery, fools upon themselves impose.
But why before us protestants produce
An Indian mystic, or a French recluse?
Their sin is plain; but what have we to fear,
Reformed and well instructed? You shall hear.
Yon ancient prude, whose withered features show
She might be young some forty years ago,
Her elbows pinioned close upon her hips,
Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,
Her eye-brows arched, her eyes both gone astray
To watch yon amorous couple in their play,
With bony and unkerchiefed neck defies
The rude inclemency of wintry skies,
And sails with lappet-head and mincing airs
Duly at chink of bell to morning prayers.
To thrift and parsimony much inclined,
She yet allows herself that boy behind;

The ſhivering urchin, bending as he goes,
With ſlip-ſhod heels, and dew-drop at his noſe;
His predeceſſor's coat advanced to wear,
Which future pages yet are doomed to ſhare,
Carries her bible tucked beneath his arm,
And hides his hands to keep his fingers warm.
She, half an angel in her own account,
Doubts not hereafter with the ſaints to mount,
Though not a grace appears on ſtricteſt ſcarch,
But that ſhe faſts, and *item*, goes to church.
Conſcious of age ſhe recollects her youth,
And tells, not always with an eye to truth,
Who ſpanned her waiſt, and who, wherever he came,
Scrawled upon glaſs miſs Bridget's lovely name;
Who ſtole her ſlipper, filled it with tokay,
And drank the little bumper every day.
Of temper as envenomed as an aſp,
Cenſorious, and her every word a waſp;
In faithful memory ſhe records the crimes
Or real, or fictitious, of the times;
Laughs at the reputations ſhe has torn,
And holds them dangling at arms length in ſcorn.
Such are the fruits of ſanctimonious pride,
Of malice fed while fleſh is mortified:
Take, Madam, the reward of all your prayers,
Where hermits and where bramins meet with theirs;

Your portion is with them.—Nay, never frown,
But, if you pleaſe, ſome fathoms lower down.
Artiſt attend—your bruſhes and your paint—
Produce them—take a chair—now draw a Saint.
Oh ſorrowful and ſad! the ſtreaming tears
Channel her cheeks—a Niobe appears!
Is this a Saint? Throw tints and all away—
True piety is cheerful as the day,
Will weep indeed and heave a pitying groan
For others' woes, but ſmiles upon her own.
What purpoſe has the King of ſaints in view?
Why falls the goſpel like a gracious dew?
To call up plenty from the teeming earth,
Or curſe the deſart with a tenfold dearth?
Is it that Adam's offspring may be ſaved
From ſervile fear, or be the more enſlaved?
To looſe the links that galled mankind before,
Or bind them faſter on, and add ſtill more?
The freeborn Chriſtian has no chains to prove,
Or, if a chain, the golden one of love:
No fear attends to quench his glowing fires,
What fear he feels his gratitude inſpires.
Shall he for ſuch deliverance freely wrought,
Recompenſe ill? He trembles at the thought.
His maſter's intereſt and his own combined
Prompt every movement of his heart and mind.

Thought, word and deed, his liberty evince,
His freedom is the freedom of a prince.
Man's obligations infinite, of courſe
His life ſhould prove that he perceives their force;
His utmoſt he can render is but ſmall—
The principle and motive all in all.
You have two ſervants—Tom, an arch, ſly rogue,
From top to toe the Geta now in vogue,
Genteel in figure, eaſy in addreſs,
Moves without noiſe, and ſwift as an expreſs,
Reports a meſſage with a pleaſing grace,
Expert in all the duties of his place;
Say, on what hinge does his obedience move?
Has he a world of gratitude and love?
No, not a ſpark—'tis all mere ſharper's play;
He likes your houſe, your houſemaid, and your pay;
Reduce his wages, or get rid of her,
Tom quits you, with—Your moſt obedient, Sir.
The dinner ſerved, Charles takes his uſual ſtand,
Watches your eye, anticipates command;
Sighs if perhaps your appetite ſhould fail;
And if he but ſuſpects a frown, turns pale;
Conſults all day your intereſt and your eaſe,
Richly rewarded if he can but pleaſe;
And, proud to make his firm attachment known,
To ſave your life would nobly riſk his own.

Now which ſtands higheſt in your ſerious thought?
Charles, without doubt, ſay you—and ſo he ought;
One act, that from a thankful heart proceeds,
Excels ten thouſand mercenary deeds.
Thus heaven approves as honeſt and ſincere
The work of generous love and filial fear;
But with averted eyes the omniſcient Judge
Scorns the baſe hireling, and the ſlaviſh drudge.
Where dwell theſe matchleſs ſaints?—old Curio cries.
Even at your ſide, Sir, and before your eyes,
The favoured few—the enthuſiaſts you deſpiſe.
And pleaſed at heart becauſe on holy ground
Sometimes a canting hypocrite is found,
Reproach a people with his ſingle fall,
And caſt his filthy raiment at them all.
Attend!—an apt ſimilitude ſhall ſhow
Whence ſprings the conduct that offends you ſo.
See where it ſmokes along the ſounding plain,
Blown all aſlant, a driving, daſhing rain,
Peal upon peal redoubling all around,
Shakes it again and after to the ground;
Now flaſhing wide, now glancing as in play,
Swift beyond thought the lightnings dart away.
Ere yet it came the traveller urged his ſteed,
And hurried, but with unſucceſsful ſpeed;

Now drenched throughout, and hopeleſs of his caſe,
He drops the rein, and leaves him to his pace.
Suppoſe, unlooked for in a ſcene ſo rude,
Long hid by interpoſing hill or wood,
Some manſion, neat and elegantly dreſſed,
By ſome kind hoſpitable heart poſſeſſed,
Offer him warmth, ſecurity, and reſt;
Think with what pleaſure, ſafe and at his eaſe,
He hears the tempeſt howling in the trees;
What glowing thanks his lips and heart employ,
While danger paſt is turned to preſent joy.
So fares it with the ſinner, when he feels
A growing dread of vengeance at his heels:
His conſcience, like a glaſſy lake before,
Laſhed into foaming waves begins to roar;
The law grown clamorous, though ſilent long,
Arraigns him—charges him with every wrong—
Aſſerts the rights of his offended Lord,
And death or reſtitution is the word:
The laſt impoſſible, he fears the firſt,
And, having well deſerved, expects the worſt.
Then welcome refuge, and a peaceful home;
Oh for a ſhelter from the wrath to come!
Cruſh me ye rocks; ye falling mountains hide,
Or bury me in ocean's angry tide.—

The ſcrutiny of thoſe all-ſeeing eyes
I dare not—And you need not, God replies;
The remedy you want I freely give:
The book ſhall teach you—read, believe, and live!
'Tis done—the raging ſtorm is heard no more,
Mercy receives him on her peaceful ſhore:
And Juſtice, guardian of the dread command,
Drops the red vengeance from his willing hand.
A ſoul redeemed demands a life of praiſe;
Hence the complexion of his future days,
Hence a demeanour holy and unſpeckt,
And the world's hatred, as its ſure effect.
Some lead a life unblameable and juſt,
Their own dear virtue their unſhaken truſt:
They never ſin—or if (as all offend)
Some trivial ſlips their daily walk attend,
The poor are near at hand, the charge is ſmall,
A ſlight gratuity atones for all.
For though the pope has loſt his intereſt here,
And pardons are not ſold as once they were,
No papiſt more deſirous to compound,
Than ſome grave ſinners upon Engliſh ground.
That plea refuted, other quirks they ſeek—
Mercy is infinite, and man is weak;
The future ſhall obliterate the paſt,
And heaven no doubt ſhall be their home at laſt.

Come then—a ſtill, ſmall whiſper in your ear—
He has no hope who never had a fear;
And he that never doubted of his ſtate,
He may perhaps—perhaps he may—too late.
The path to bliſs abounds with many a ſnare;
Learning is one, and wit, however rare.
The Frenchman, firſt in literary fame,
(Mention him if you pleaſe. Voltaire?—The ſame.)
With ſpirit, genius, eloquence, ſupplied,
Lived long, wrote much, laughed heartily, and died;
The ſcripture was his jeſt-book, whence he drew
Bon mots to gall the Chriſtian and the Jew;
An infidel in health, but what when ſick?
Oh—then a text would touch him at the quick:
View him at Paris in his laſt career,
Surrounding throngs the demi-god revere,
Exalted on his pedeſtal of pride,
And fumed with frankincenſe on every ſide,
He begs their flattery with his lateſt breath,
And ſmothered in't at laſt, is praiſed to death.
Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little ſtore;
Content though mean, and cheerful if not gay,
Shuffling her threads about the live-long day,
Juſt earns a ſcanty pittance, and at night
Lies down ſecure, her heart and pocket light;

She, for her humble ſphere by nature fit,
Has little underſtanding, and no wit,
Receives no praiſe; but, though her lot be ſuch,
(Toilſome and indigent, ſhe renders much;
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew;
And in that charter reads with ſparkling eyes
Her title to a treaſure in the ſkies.

Oh happy peaſant! Oh unhappy bard!
His the mere tinſel, her's the rich reward;
He praiſed perhaps for ages yet to come,
She never heard of half a mile from home:
He loſt in errors his vain heart prefers,
She ſafe in the ſimplicity of her's.

Not many wiſe, rich, noble, or profound
In ſcience, win one inch of heavenly ground.
And is it not a mortifying thought
The poor ſhould gain it, and the rich ſhould not?
No—the voluptuaries, who never forget
One pleaſure loſt, loſe heaven without regret;
Regret would rouſe them, and give birth to prayer,
Prayer would add faith, and faith would fix them there.

Not that the Former of us all in this,
Or aught he does, is governed by caprice;
The ſuppoſition is replete with ſin,
And bears the brand of blaſphemy burnt in.

Not ſo—the ſilver trumpet's heavenly call
Sounds for the poor, but ſounds alike for all:
Kings are invited, and would kings obey,
No ſlaves on earth more welcome were than they:
But royalty, nobility, and ſtate,
Are ſuch a dead preponderating weight,
That endleſs bliſs (how ſtrange ſoever it ſeem)
In counterpoiſe, flies up and kicks the beam.
'Tis open, and ye cannot enter—why?
Becauſe ye will not, Conyers would reply—
And he ſays much that many may diſpute
And cavil at with eaſe, but none refute.
Oh bleſſed effect of penury and want,
The ſeed ſown there, how vigorous is the plant!
No ſoil like poverty for growth divine,
As leaneſt land ſupplies the richeſt wine.
Earth gives too little, giving only bread,
To nouriſh pride, or turn the weakeſt head:
To them the ſounding jargon of the ſchools
Seems what it is—a cap and bell for fools:
The light they walk by, kindled from above,
Shows them the ſhorteſt way to life and love:
They, ſtrangers to the controverſial field,
Where deiſts, always foiled, yet ſcorn to yield,
And never checked by what impedes the wiſe,
Believe, ruſh forward, and poſſeſs the prize.

Envy, ye great, the dull unlettered ſmall:
Ye have much cauſe for envy—but not all.
We boaſt ſome rich ones whom the goſpel ſways,
And one who wears a coronet and prays;
Like gleanings of an olive-tree they ſhow,
Here and there one upon the topmoſt bough.
How readily upon the goſpel plan,
That queſtion has its anſwer—What is man?
Sinful and weak, in every ſenſe a wretch;
An inſtrument, whoſe chords upon the ſtretch,
And ſtrained to the laſt ſcrew that he can bear,
Yield only diſcord in his Maker's ear:
Once the bleſt reſidence of truth divine,
Glorious as Solyma's interior ſhrine,
Where, in his own oracular abode,
Dwelt viſibly the light-creating God;
But made long ſince, like Babylon of old,
A den of miſchiefs never to be told:
And ſhe, once miſtreſs of the realms around,
Now ſcattered wide and no where to be found,
As ſoon ſhall riſe and re-aſcend the throne,
By native power and energy her own,
As nature at her own peculiar coſt,
Reſtore to man the glories he has loſt.
Go—bid the winter ceaſe to chill the year,
Replace the wandering comet in his ſphere,

Then boaſt (but wait for that unhoped for hour)
The ſelf-reſtoring arm of human power.
But what is man in his own proud eſteem?
Hear him—himſelf the poet and the theme:
A monarch clothed with majeſty and awe,
His mind his kingdom, and his will his law,
Grace in his mien, and glory in his eyes,
Supreme on earth, and worthy of the ſkies,
Strength in his heart, dominion in his nod,
And, thunderbolts excepted, quite a God!
So ſings he, charmed with his own mind and form,
The ſong magnificent—the theme a worm!
Himſelf ſo much the ſource of his delight,
His Maker has no beauty in his ſight.
See where he ſits contemplative and fixed,
Pleaſure and wonder in his features mixed,
His paſſions tamed and all at his controul,
How perfect the compoſure of his ſoul;
Complacency has breathed a gentle gale
Over all his thoughts, and ſwelled his eaſy ſail:
His books well trimmed and in the gayeſt ſtyle
Like regimented coxcombs rank and file,
Adorn his intellects as well as ſhelves,
And teach him notions ſplendid as themſelves:
The Bible only ſtands neglected there,
Though that of all moſt worthy of his care;

And like an infant troubleſome awake,
Is left to ſleep for peace and quiet ſake.
What ſhall the man deſerve of human kind,
Whoſe happy ſkill and induſtry combined
Shall prove (what argument could never yet)
The Bible an impoſture and a cheat?
The praiſes of the libertine profeſſed,
The worſt of men, and curſes of the beſt.
Where ſhould the living, weeping over his woes,
The dying, trembling at the awful cloſe,
Where the betrayed, forſaken, and oppreſſed,
The thouſands whom the world forbids to reſt,
Where ſhould they find, (thoſe comforts at an end
The ſcripture yields) or hope to find, a friend?
Sorrow might muſe herſelf to madneſs then,
And ſeeking exile from the ſight of men,
Bury herſelf in ſolitude profound,
Grow frantic with her pangs, and bite the ground.
Thus often unbelief, grown ſick of life,
Flies to the tempting pool, or felon knife.
The jury meet, the coroner is ſhort,
And lunacy the verdict of the court;
Reverſe the ſentence, let the truth be known,
Such lunacy is ignorance alone;
They knew not, what ſome biſhops may not know,
That ſcripture is the only cure of woe;

That field of promiſe, how it flings abroad
Its odour over the Chriſtian's thorny road!
The ſoul, repoſing on aſſured relief,
Feels herſelf happy amidſt all her grief,
Forgets her labour as ſhe toils along,
Weeps tears of joy, and burſts into a ſong.
But the ſame word, that, like the poliſhed ſhare,
Ploughs up the roots of a believer's care,
Kills too the flowery weeds, wherever they grow,
That bind the ſinner's Bacchanalian brow.
Oh that unwelcome voice of heavenly love,
Sad meſſenger of mercy from above!
How does it grate upon his thankleſs ear,
Crippling his pleaſures with the cramp of fear!
His will and judgment at continual ſtrife,
That civil war imbitters all his life:
In vain he points his powers againſt the ſkies,
In vain he cloſes or averts his eyes,
Truth will intrude—ſhe bids him yet beware;
And ſhakes the ſceptic in the ſcorner's chair.
Though various foes againſt the truth combine,
Pride above all oppoſes her deſign;
Pride, of a growth ſuperior to the reſt,
The ſubtleſt ſerpent with the loftieſt creſt,
Swells at the thought, and, kindling into rage,
Would hiſs the cherub mercy from the ſtage.

And is the ſoul indeed ſo loſt?—ſhe cries,
Fallen from her glory and too weak to riſe?
Torpid and dull beneath a frozen zone,
Has ſhe no ſpark that may be deemed her own?
Grant her indebted to what zealots call
Grace undeſerved, yet ſurely not for all—
Some beams of rectitude ſhe yet diſplays,
Some love of virtue, and ſome power to praiſe;
Can lift herſelf above corporeal things,
And, ſoaring on her own unborrowed wings,
Poſſeſs herſelf of all that's good or true,
Aſſert the ſkies, and vindicate her due.
Paſt indiſcretion is a venial crime,
And if the youth, unmellowed yet by time,
Bore on his branch luxuriant then and rude
Fruits of a blighted ſize, auſtere and crude,
Maturer years ſhall happier ſtores produce,
And meliorate the well concocted juice.
Then, conſcious of her meritorious zeal,
To juſtice ſhe may make her bold appeal,
And leave to mercy with a tranquil mind,
The worthleſs and unfruitful of mankind.
Hear then how mercy, ſlighted and defied,
Retorts the affront againſt the crown of pride.
Periſh the virtue, as it ought, abhorred,
And the fool with it, who inſults his Lord.

The atonement, a Redeemer's love has wrought,
Is not for you—the righteous need it not.
Seeſt thou yon harlot wooing all ſhe meets,
The worn-out nuiſance of the public ſtreets,
Herſelf from morn to night, from night to morn,
Her own abhorrence, and as much your ſcorn:
The gracious ſhower, unlimited and free,
Shall fall on her, when heaven denies it thee.
Of all that wiſdom dictates, this the drift,
That man is dead in ſin, and life a gift.
Is virtue then, unleſs of Chriſtian growth,
Mere fallacy, or fooliſhneſs, or both?
Ten thouſand ſages loſt in endleſs woe,
For ignorance of what they could not know?
That ſpeech betrays at once a bigot's tongue,
Charge not a God with ſuch outrageous wrong.
Truly not I—the partial light men have,
My creed perſuades me, well-employed, may ſave;
While he that ſcorns the noon-day beam, perverſe,
Shall find the bleſſing unimproved a curſe.
Let heathen worthies, whoſe exalted mind
Left ſenſuality and droſs behind,
Poſſeſs for me their undiſputed lot,
And take unenvied the reward they fought.
But ſtill in virtue of a Saviour's plea,
Not blind by choice, but deſtined not to ſee.

Their fortitude and wiſdom were a flame
Celeſtial, though they knew not whence it came,
Derived from the ſame ſource of light and grace,
That guides the Chriſtian in his ſwifter race;
Their judge was conſcience, and her rule their law,
That rule, purſued with reverence and with awe,
Led them, however faltering, faint, and ſlow,
From what they knew, to what they wiſhed to know.
But let not him that ſhares a brighter day,
Traduce the ſplendour of a noon-tide ray,
Prefer the twilight of a darker time,
And deem his baſe ſtupidity no crime;
The wretch, who ſlights the bounty of the ſkies,
And ſinks, while favoured with the means to riſe,
Shall find them rated at their full amount,
The good he ſcorned all carried to account.

Marſhalling all his terrors as he came,
Thunder, and earthquake, and devouring flame,
From Sinai's top Jehovah gave the law,
Life for obedience, death for every flaw.
When the great Sovereign would his will expreſs,
He gives a perfect rule, what can he leſs?
And guards it with a ſanction as ſevere
As vengeance can inflict, or ſinners fear:
Elſe his own glorious rights he would diſclaim,
And man might ſafely trifle with his name.

He bids him glow with unremitting love
To all on earth, and to himſelf above;
Condemns the injurious deed, the ſlanderous tongue,
The thought that meditates a brother's wrong:
Brings not alone the more conſpicuous part,
His conduct to the teſt, but tries his heart.

Hark! univerſal nature ſhook and groaned,
'Twas the laſt trumpet—ſee the Judge enthroned:
Rouſe all your courage at your utmoſt need,
Now ſummon every virtue, ſtand and plead.
What! ſilent? Is your boaſting heard no more?
That ſelf-renouncing wiſdom, learned before,
Has ſhed immortal glories on your brow,
That all your virtues cannot purchaſe now.

All joy to the believer! He can ſpeak—
Trembling yet happy, confident yet meek.

Since the dear hour that brought me to thy foot,
And cut up all my follies by the root,
I never truſted in an arm but thine,
Nor hoped, but in thy righteouſneſs divine:
My prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled,
Were but the feeble efforts of a child
However performed, it was their brighteſt part
That they proceeded from a grateful heart:
Cleanſed in thine own all-purifying blood,
Forgive their evil, and accept their good;

I caſt them at thy feet—my only plea
Is what it was, dependence upon thee,
While ſtruggling in the vale of tears below,
That never failed, nor ſhall it fail me now.
Angelic gratulations rend the ſkies,
Pride falls unpitied never more to riſe,
Humility is crowned, and faith receives the prize.

EXPOSTULATION.

Tantane, tam patiens, nullo certamine tolli
Dona sines? VIRG.

WHY weeps the muſe for England? What appears
In England's caſe to move the muſe to tears?
From ſide to ſide of her delightful iſle
Is ſhe not clothed with a perpetual ſmile?
Can nature add a charm, or art confer
A new-found luxury not ſeen in her?
Where under heaven is pleaſure more purſued,
Or where does cold reflection leſs intrude?
Her fields a rich expanſe of wavy corn,
Poured out from plenty's overflowing horn;
Ambroſial gardens, in which art ſupplies
The fervour and the force of Indian ſkies;
Her peaceful ſhores, where buſy commerce waits
To pour his golden tide through all her gates;

Whom fiery ſuns, that ſcorch the ruffet ſpice
Of eaſtern groves, and oceans floored with ice
Forbid in vain to puſh his daring way
To darker climes, or climes of brighter day;
Whom the winds waft wherever the billows roll,
From the world's girdle to the frozen pole;
The chariots bounding in her wheel-worn ſtreets,
Her vaults below, where every vintage meets;
Her theatres, her revels, and her ſports;
The ſcenes, to which not youth alone reſorts,
But age, in ſpite of weakneſs and of pain,
Still haunts, in hope to dream of youth again;
All ſpeak her happy: let the muſe look round
From Eaſt to Weſt, no ſorrow can be found:
Or only what, in cottages confined,
Sighs unregarded to the paſſing wind.
Then wherefore weep for England? What appears
In England's caſe to move the muſe to tears?
The prophet wept for Iſrael; wiſhed his eyes
Were fountains fed with infinite ſupplies:
For Iſrael dealt in robbery and wrong;
There were the ſcorner's and the ſlanderer's tongue;
Oaths, uſed as playthings or convenient tools,
As intereſt biaſſed knaves, or faſhion fools;
Adultery, neighing at his neighbour's door;
Oppreſſion, labouring hard to grind the poor;

The partial balance, and deceitful weight;
The treacherous ſmile, a maſk for ſecret hate;
Hypocriſy, formality in prayer,
And the dull ſervice of the lip were there.
Her women, inſolent and ſelf-careſſed,
By vanity's unwearied finger dreſſed,
Forgot the bluſh that virgin fears impart
To modeſt cheeks, and borrowed one from art;
Were juſt ſuch trifles, without worth or uſe,
As filly pride and idleneſs produce;
Curled, ſcented, furbelowed, and flounced around,
With feet too delicate to touch the ground,
They ſtretched the neck, and rolled the wanton eye,
And ſighed for every fool that fluttered by.

He ſaw his people ſlaves to every luſt,
Lewd, avaricious, arrogant, unjuſt;
He heard the wheels of an avenging God
Groan heavily along the diſtant road;
Saw Babylon ſet wide her two-leaved braſs
To let the military deluge paſs;
Jeruſalem a prey, her glory foiled,
Her princes captive, and her treaſures ſpoiled;
Wept till all Iſrael heard his bitter cry,
Stamped with his foot, and ſmote upon his thigh:
But wept, and ſtamped, and ſmote his thigh in vain,
Pleaſure is deaf when told of future pain,

And ſounds prophetic are too rough to ſuit
Ears long accuſtomed to the pleaſing lute:
They ſcorned his inſpiration and his theme,
Pronounced him frantic, and his fears a dream;
With ſelf-indulgence winged the fleeting hours,
Till the foe found them, and down fell the towers.

Long time Aſſyria bound them in her chain,
Till penitence had purged the public ſtain,
And Cyrus, with relenting pity moved,
Returned them happy to the land they loved;
There, proof againſt proſperity, awhile
They ſtood the teſt of her enſnaring ſmile,
And had the grace in ſcenes of peace to ſhow
The virtue, they had learned in ſcenes of woe.
But man is frail, and can but ill ſuſtain
A long immunity from grief and pain;
And after all the joys that plenty leads,
With tip-toe ſtep vice ſilently ſucceeds.

When he that ruled them with a ſhepherd's rod,
In form a man, in dignity a God,
Came, not expected in that humble guiſe,
To ſift and ſearch them with unerring eyes,
He found, concealed beneath a fair outſide,
The filth of rottenneſs and worm of pride;
Their piety a ſyſtem of deceit,
Scripture employed to ſanctify the cheat;

The phariſee the dupe of his own art,
Self-idolized and yet a knave at heart.
When nations are to periſh in their ſins,
'Tis in the church the leproſy begins;
The prieſt, whoſe office is with zeal ſincere
To watch the fountain and preſerve it clear,
Careleſsly nods and ſleeps upon the brink,
While others poiſon what the flock muſt drink;
Or, waking at the call of luſt alone,
Infuſes lies and errors of his own;
His unſuſpecting ſheep believe it pure;
And, tainted by the very means of cure,
Catch from each other a contagious ſpot,
The foul fore-runner of a general rot.
Then truth is huſhed that hereſy may preach,
And all is traſh that reaſon cannot reach:
Then God's own image on the ſoul impreſſed
Becomes a mockery, and a ſtanding jeſt;
And faith, the root whence only can ariſe
The graces of a life that wins the ſkies,
Loſes at once all value and eſteem,
Pronounced by grey-beards a pernicious dream;
Then ceremony leads her bigots forth,
Prepared to fight for ſhadows of no worth;
While truths, on which eternal things depend,
Find not, or hardly find, a ſingle friend;

As ſoldiers watch the ſignal of command,
They learn to bow, to kneel, to ſit, to ſtand;
Happy to fill religion's vacant place
With hollow form, and geſture, and grimace.
Such, when the teacher of his church was there,
People and prieſt, the ſons of Iſrael were;
Stiff in the letter, lax in the deſign
And import, of their oracles divine;
Their learning legendary, falſe, abſurd,
And yet exalted above God's own word;
They drew a curſe from an intended good,
Puffed up with gifts they never underſtood.
He judged them with as terrible a frown,
As if not love, but wrath, had brought him down:
Yet he was gentle as ſoft ſummer airs,
Had grace for others' ſins, but none for theirs;
Through all he ſpoke a noble plainneſs ran—
Rhetoric is artifice, the work of man;
And tricks and turns, that fancy may deviſe,
Are far too mean for him that rules the ſkies.
The aſtoniſhed vulgar trembled while he tore
The maſk from faces never ſeen before;
He ſtripped the impoſtors in the noon-day ſun,
Showed that they followed all they ſeemed to ſhun;
Their prayers made public, their exceſſes kept
As private as the chambers where they ſlept;

The temple and its holy rites profaned
By mummeries, he that dwelt in it diſdained;
Uplifted hands, that at convenient times
Could act extortion and the worſt of crimes,
Waſhed with a neatneſs ſcrupulouſly nice,
And free from every taint but that of vice.
Judgment, however tardy, mends her pace
When obſtinacy once has conquered grace.
They ſaw diſtemper healed, and life reſtored,
In anſwer to the fiat of his word;
Confeſſed the wonder, and with daring tongue
Blaſphemed the authority from which it ſprung.
They knew by ſure prognoſtics ſeen on high,
The future tone and temper of the ſky;
But, grave diſſemblers! could not underſtand
That ſin let loose ſpeaks puniſhment at hand.
Aſk now of hiſtory's authentic page,
And call up evidence from every age;
Diſplay with buſy and laborious hand
The bleſſings of the moſt indebted land;
What nation will you find, whoſe annals prove
So rich an intereſt in almighty love?
Where dwell they now, where dwelt in ancient day
A people planted, watered, bleſt as they?
Let Egypt's plagues and Canaan's woes proclaim
The favours poured upon the Jewiſh name;

Their freedom purchaſed for them at the coſt
Of all, their hard oppreſſors valued moſt;
Their title to a country not their own
Made ſure by prodigies till then unknown;
For them the ſtates, they left, made waſte and void;
For them, the ſtates, to which they went, deſtroyed;
A cloud to meaſure out their march by day,
By night a fire to cheer the gloomy way;
That moving ſignal ſummoning, when beſt,
Their hoſt to move, and when it ſtayed, to reſt.
For them the rocks diſſolved into a flood,
The dews condenſed into angelic food,
Their very garments ſacred, old yet new,
And Time forbid to touch them as he flew;
Streams, ſwelled above the bank, enjoined to ſtand,
While they paſſed through to their appointed land;
Their leader armed with meekneſs, zeal, and love,
And graced with clear credentials from above;
Themſelves ſecured beneath the Almighty wing;
Their God their captain *, lawgiver, and king;
Crowned with a thouſand victories, and at laſt
Lords of the conquered ſoil, there rooted faſt,
In peace poſſeſſing what they won by war,
Their name far publiſhed, and revered as far;
Where will you find a race like theirs, endowed
With all that man ever wiſhed, or heaven beſtowed?

* Vide Joſhua v. 14.

They, and they only, amongſt all mankind
Received the tranſcript of the eternal mind;
Were truſted with his own engraven laws,
And conſtituted guardians of his cauſe;
Theirs were the prophets, theirs the prieſtly call,
And theirs by birth the Saviour of us all.
In vain the nations, that had ſeen them riſe
With fierce and envious yet admiring eyes,
Had ſought to cruſh them guarded, as they were
By power divine, and ſkill that could not err.
Had they maintained allegiance firm and ſure,
And kept the faith immaculate and pure,
Then the proud eagles of all-conquering Rome
Had found one city not to be overcome;
And the twelve ſtandards of the tribes unfurled
Had bid defiance to the warring world.
But grace abuſed brings forth the foulſt deeds,
As richeſt ſoil the moſt luxuriant weeds.
Cured of the golden calves, their fathers' ſin,
They ſet up ſelf, that idol god within;
Viewed a Deliverer with diſdain and hate,
Who left them ſtill a tributary ſtate;
Seized faſt his hand, held out to ſet them free
From a worſe yoke, and nailed it to the tree:
There was the conſummation and the crown,
The flower of Iſrael's infamy full blown;

Thence date their ſad declenſion and their fall,
Their woes not yet repealed thence date them all.
Thus fell the beſt inſtructed in her day,
And the moſt favoured land, look where we may.
Philoſophy indeed on Grecian eyes
Had poured the day, and cleared the Roman ſkies;
In other climes perhaps creative art,
With power ſurpaſſing their's, performed her part,
Might give more life to marble, or might fill
The glowing tablets with a juſter ſkill,
Might ſhine in fable, and grace idle themes
With all the embroidery of poetic dreams;
'Twas their's alone to dive into the plan,
That truth and mercy had revealed to man;
And while the world beſide, that plan unknown,
Deified uſeleſs wood, or ſenſeleſs ſtone,
They breathed in faith their well-directed prayers,
And the true God, the God of truth, was their's.
Their glory faded, and their race diſperſed,
The laſt of nations now, though once the firſt;
They warn and teach the proudeſt, would they learn,
Keep wiſdom, or meet vengeance in your turn:
If we eſcaped not, if Heaven ſpared not us,
Peeled, ſcattered, and exterminated thus;
If vice received her retribution due
When we were viſited, what hope for you?

When God ariſes with an awful frown
To puniſh luſt, or pluck preſumption down ;
When gifts perverted, or not duly prized,
Pleaſure overvalued, and his grace deſpiſed,
Provoke the vengeance of his righteous hand
To pour down wrath upon a thankleſs land ;
He will be found impartially ſevere,
Too juſt to wink, or ſpeak the guilty clear.
Oh Iſrael, of all nations moſt undone !
Thy diadem diſplaced, thy ſceptre gone ;
Thy temple, once thy glory, fallen and raſed,
And thou a worſhipper even where thou mayeſt ;
Thy ſervices, once only without ſpot,
Mere ſhadows now, their ancient pomp forgot ;
Thy Levites, once a conſecrated hoſt,
No longer Levites, and their lineage loſt.
And thou thyſelf over every country ſown,
With none on earth that thou canſt call thine own ;
Cry aloud. thou that ſitteſt in the duſt,
Cry to the proud, the cruel, and unjuſt ;
Knock at the gates of nations, rouſe their fears ;
Say wrath is coming, and the ſtorm appears ;
But raiſe the ſhrilleſt cry in Britiſh ears.

What ails thee, reſtleſs as the waves that roar,
And fling their foam againſt thy chalky ſhore ?

Miſtreſs, at leaſt while Providence ſhall pleaſe,
And trident-bearing queen of the wide ſeas—
Why, having kept good faith, and often ſhown
Friendſhip and truth to others, findeſt thou none?
Thou that haſt ſet the perſecuted free,
None interpoſes now to ſuccour thee.
Countries indebted to thy power, that ſhine
With light derived from thee, would ſmother thine:
Thy very children watch for thy diſgrace—
A lawleſs brood, and curſe thee to thy face.
Thy rulers load thy credit, year by year,
With ſums Peruvian mines could never clear;
As if, like arches built with ſkilful hand,
The more 'twere preſt the firmer it would ſtand.
The cry in all thy ſhips is ſtill the ſame,
Speed us away to battle and to fame.
Thy mariners explore the wild expanſe,
Impatient to deſcry the flags of France:
But though they fight as thine have ever fought,
Return aſhamed without the wreaths they ſought,
Thy ſenate is a ſcene of civil jar,
Chaos of contrarieties at war;
Where ſharp and ſolid, phlegmatic and light,
Diſcordant atoms meet, ferment, and fight;
Where obſtinacy takes his ſturdy ſtand,
To diſconcert what policy has planned;

Where policy is buſied all night long
In ſetting right what faction has ſet wrong;
Where flails of oratory threſh the floor,
That yields them chaff and duſt, and nothing more.
Thy racked inhabitants repine, complain,
Taxed till the brow of labour ſweats in vain;
War lays a burthen on the reeling ſtate,
And peace does nothing to relieve the weight;
Succeſſive loads ſucceeding broils impoſe,
And ſighing millions propheſy the cloſe.
Is adverſe providence, when pondered well,
So dimly writ, or difficult to ſpell,
Thou canſt not read with readineſs and eaſe
Providence adverſe in events like theſe?
Know then that heavenly wiſdom on this ball
Creates, gives birth to, guides, conſummates all;
That, while laborious and quick-thoughted man
Snuffs up the praiſe of what he ſeems to plan,
He firſt conceives, then perfects his deſign,
As a mere inſtrument in hands divine:
Blind to the working of that ſecret power,
That balances the wings of every hour,
The buſy trifler dreams himſelf alone,
Frames many a purpoſe, and God works his own.
States thrive or wither as moons wax and wane,
Even as his will and his decrees ordain;

While honour, virtue, piety bear ſway,
They flouriſh; and as theſe decline, decay:
In juſt reſentment of his injured laws,
He pours contempt on them and on their cauſe;
Strikes the rough thread of error right athwart
The web of every ſcheme they have at heart;
Bids rottenneſs invade and bring to duſt
The pillars of ſupport, in which they truſt,
And do his errand of diſgrace and ſhame
On the chief ſtrength and glory of the ſame,
None ever yet impeded what he wrought,
None bars him out from his moſt ſecret thought:
Darkneſs itſelf before his eye is light,
And hell's cloſe miſchief naked in his ſight.

Stand now and judge thyſelf—Haſt thou incurred
His anger, who can waſte thee with a word,
Who poiſes and proportions ſea and land,
Weighing them in the hollow of his hand,
And in whoſe awful ſight all nations ſeem
As graſshoppers, as duſt, a drop, a dream?
Haſt thou (a ſacrilege his ſoul abhors)
Claimed all the glory of thy proſperous wars?
Proud of thy fleets and armies, ſtolen the gem
Of his juſt praiſe, to laviſh it on them?
Haſt thou not learned, what thou art often told,
A truth ſtill ſacred, and believed of old,

That no ſucceſs attends on ſpears and ſwords
Unbleſt, and that the battle is the Lord's ?
That courage is his creature, and diſmay
The poſt, that at his bidding ſpeeds away,
Ghaſtly in feature, and his ſtammering tongue
With doleful humour and ſad preſage hung,
To quell the valour of the ſtouteſt heart,
And teach the combatant a woman's part ?
That he bids thouſands fly when none purſue,
Saves as he will by many or by few,
And claims for ever, as his royal right,
The event and ſure deciſion of the fight ?
Haſt thou, though ſuckled at fair freedom's breaſt,
Exported ſlavery to the conquered Eaſt,
Pulled down the tyrants India ſerved with dread,
And raiſed thyſelf, a greater in their ſtead ?
Gone thither armed and hungry, returned full,
Fed from the richeſt veins of the Mogul,
A deſpot big with power obtained by wealth,
And that obtained by rapine and by ſtealth ?
With Aſiatic vices ſtored thy mind,
But left their virtues and thine own behind ;
And, having trucked thy ſoul, brought home the fee,
To tempt the poor to ſell himſelf to thee ?
Haſt thou by ſtatute ſhoved from its deſign
The Saviour's feaſt, his own bleſt bread and wine,

And made the ſymbols of atoning grace
An office-key, a pick-lock to a place,
That infidels may prove their title good
By an oath dipped in ſacramental blood?
A blot that will be ſtill a blot, in ſpite
Of all that grave apologiſts may write;
And though a biſhop toil to cleanſe the ſtain,
He wipes and ſcours the ſilver cup in vain.
And haſt thou ſworn on every ſlight pretence,
Till perjuries are common as bad pence,
While thouſands, careleſs of the damning ſin,
Kiſs the book's outſide, who never looked within?
Haſt thou, when heaven has clothed thee with diſgrace,
And long provoked, repaid thee to thy face,
(For thou haſt known eclipſes, and endured
Dimneſs and anguiſh, all thy beams obſcured,
When ſin has ſhed diſhonour on thy brow;
And never of a ſabler hue than now),
Haſt thou, with heart perverſe and conſcience ſeared,
Deſpiſing all rebuke, ſtill perſevered,
And having choſen evil, ſcorned the voice
That cried, Repent!—and gloried in thy choice?
Thy faſtings, when calamity at laſt
Suggeſts the expedient of a yearly faſt,
What mean they? Canſt thou dream there is a power
In lighter diet at a later hour,

To charm to ſleep the threatening of the ſkies,
And hide paſt folly from all-ſeeing eyes?
The faſt, that wins deliverance, and ſuſpends
The ſtroke that a vindictive God intends,
Is to renounce hypocriſy; to draw
Thy life upon the pattern of the law;
To war with pleaſure idolized before;
To vanquiſh luſt, and wear its yoke no more.
All faſting elſe, whatever be the pretence,
Is wooing mercy by renewed offence.

Haſt thou within thee ſin, that in old time
Brought fire from heaven, the ſex-abuſing crime,
Whoſe horrid perpetration ſtamps diſgrace,
Baboons are free from, upon human race?
Think on the fruitful and well-watered ſpot,
That fed the flocks and herds of wealthy Lot,
Where Paradiſe ſeemed ſtill vouchſafed on earth,
Burning and ſcorched into perpetual dearth,
Or, in his words who damned the baſe deſire,
Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire:
Then nature injured, ſcandalized, defiled,
Unveiled her bluſhing cheek, looked on, and ſmiled;
Beheld with joy the lovely ſcene defaced,
And praiſed the wrath, that laid her beauties waſte.

Far be the thought from any verſe of mine,
And farther ſtill the formed and fixed deſign,

To thruſt the charge of deeds, that I deteſt,
Againſt an innocent unconſcious breaſt:
The man that dares traduce, becauſe he can
With ſafety to himſelf, is not a man:
An individual is a ſacred mark,
Not to be pierced in play, or in the dark;
But public cenſure ſpeaks a public foe,
Unleſs a zeal for virtue guide the blow.

The prieſtly brotherhood, devout, ſincere,
From mean ſelf-intereſt and ambition clear,
Their hope in Heaven, ſervility their ſcorn,
Prompt to perſuade, expoſtulate, and warn,
Their wiſdom pure, and given them from above,
Their uſefulneſs enſured by zeal and love,
As meek as the man Moſes, and withal
As bold as in Agrippa's preſence Paul,
Should fly the world's contaminating touch,
Holy and unpolluted:—are thine ſuch?
Except a few with Eli's ſpirit bleſt,
Hophni and Phineas may deſcribe the reſt.

Where ſhall a teacher look in days like theſe,
For ears and hearts that he can hope to pleaſe?
Look to the poor—the ſimple and the plain
Will hear perhaps thy ſalutary ſtrain:
Humility is gentle, apt to learn,
Speak but the word, will liſten and return.

Alas, not ſo! the pooreſt of the flock
Are proud, and ſet their faces as a rock;
Denied that earthly opulence they chooſe,
God's better gift they ſcoff at, and refuſe.
The rich, the produce of a nobler ſtem,
Are more intelligent at leaſt, try them:
Oh vain inquiry! they without remorſe
Are altogether gone a devious courſe;
Where beckoning pleaſure leads them, wildly ſtray;
Have burſt the bands, and caſt the yoke away.
Now borne upon the wings of truth ſublime,
Review thy dim original and prime.
This iſland, ſpot of unreclaimed rude earth,
The cradle that received thee at thy birth,
Was rocked by many a rough Norwegian blaſt,
And Daniſh howlings ſcared thee as they paſſed;
For thou waſt born amid the din of arms,
And ſucked a breaſt that panted with alarms.
While yet thou waſt a groveling puling chit,
Thy bones not faſhioned, and thy joints not knit,
The Roman taught thy ſtubborn knee to bow,
Though twice a Cæſar could not bend thee now.
His victory was that of orient light,
When the ſun's ſhafts diſperſe the gloom of night.
Thy language at this diſtant moment ſhows
How much the country to the conqueror owes;

Expreſſive, energetic, and refined,
It ſparkles with the gems he left behind:
He brought thy land a bleſſing when he came,
He found thee ſavage, and he left thee tame;
Taught thee to clothe thy pinked and painted hide,
And grace thy figure with a ſoldier's pride;
He ſowed the ſeeds of order where he went,
Improved thee far beyond his own intent,
And, while he ruled thee by the ſword alone,
Made thee at laſt a warrior like his own.
Religion, if in heavenly truths attired,
Needs only to be ſeen to be admired;
But thine, as dark as witcheries of the night,
Was formed to harden hearts and ſhock the ſight;
Thy Druids ſtruck the well-hung harps they bore
With fingers deeply dyed in human gore;
And while the victim ſlowly bled to death,
Upon the rolling chords rung out his dying breath.
Who brought the lamp, that with awaking beams
Diſpelled thy gloom, and broke away thy dreams,
Tradition, now decrepid and worn out,
Babbler of ancient fables, leaves a doubt:
But ſtill light reached thee; and thoſe gods of thine,
Woden and Thor, each tottering in his ſhrine,
Fell broken and defaced at his own door,
As Dagon in Philiſtia long before.

But Rome with ſorceries and magic wand
Soon raiſed a cloud, that darkened every land;
And thine was ſmothered in the ſtench and fog
Of Tiber's marſhes and the papal bog.
Then prieſts with bulls and briefs, and ſhaven crowns,
And griping ſifts, and unrelenting frowns,
Legates and delegates with powers from hell,
Though heavenly in pretenſion, fleeced thee well;
And to this hour, to keep it freſh in mind,
Some twigs of that old ſcourge are left behind *.
Thy ſoldiery, the pope's well managed pack,
Were trained beneath his laſh, and knew the ſmack,
And, when he laid them on the ſcent of blood,
Would hunt a Saracen through fire and flood.
Laviſh of life to win an empty tomb,
That proved a mint of wealth, a mine to Rome,
They left their bones beneath unfriendly ſkies,
His worthleſs abſolution all the prize.
Thou waſt the verieſt ſlave in days of yore,
That ever dragged a chain or tugged an oar;
Thy monarchs arbitrary, fierce, unjuſt,
Themſelves the ſlaves of bigotry or luſt,
Diſdained thy counſels, only in diſtreſs
Found thee a goodly ſponge for power to preſs.

* Which may be found at Doctors' Commons.

Thy chiefs, the lords of many a petty fee,
Provoked and haraſſed, in return plagued thee;
Called thee away from peaceable employ,
Domeſtic happineſs and rural joy,
To waſte thy life in arms, or lay it down
In cauſeleſs feuds and bickerings of their own.
Thy parliaments adored on bended knees
The ſovereignty, they were convened to pleaſe;
Whatever was aſked, too timid to reſiſt,
Complied with, and were graciouſly diſmiſſed;
And if ſome Spartan ſoul a doubt expreſſed,
And bluſhing at the tameneſs of the reſt,
Dared to ſuppoſe the ſubject had a choice,
He was a traitor by the general voice.
Oh ſlave! with powers thou didſt not dare exert,
Verſe cannot ſtoop ſo low as thy deſert;
It ſhakes the ſides of ſplenetic diſdain,
Thou ſelf-entitled ruler of the main,
To trace thee to the date when yon fair ſea,
That clips thy ſhores, had no ſuch charms for thee;
When other nations flew from coaſt to coaſt,
And thou hadſt neither fleet nor flag to boaſt.
Kneel now, and lay thy forehead in the duſt;
Bluſh if thou canſt; not petrified, thou muſt:
Act but an honeſt and a faithful part;
Compare what then thou waſt with what thou art;

And God's diſpoſing providence confeſſed,
Obduracy itſelf muſt yield the reſt.—
Then thou art bound to ſerve him, and to prove,
Hour after hour, thy gratitude and love.
Has he not hid thee, and thy favoured land,
For ages ſafe beneath his ſheltering hand,
Given thee his bleſſing on the cleareſt proof,
Bid nations leagued againſt thee ſtand aloof,
And charged hoſtility and hate to roar,
Where elſe they would, but not upon thy ſhore?
His power ſecured thee, when preſumptuous Spain
Baptized her fleet invincible in vain;
Her gloomy monarch, doubtful and reſigned
To every pang, that racks an anxious mind,
Aſked of the waves, that broke upon his coaſt,
What tidings? and the ſurge replied—All loſt!
And when the Stuart leaning on the Scot,
Then too much feared, and now too much forgot,
Pierced to the very centre of the realm,
And hoped to ſeize his abdicated helm,
'Twas but to prove how quickly with a frown,
He that had raiſed thee could have plucked thee down.
Peculiar is the grace by thee poſſeſſed,
Thy foes implacable, thy land at reſt;
Thy thunders travel over earth and ſeas,
And all at home is pleaſure, wealth, and eaſe.

'Tis thus, extending his tempeſtuous arm,
Thy Maker fills the nations with alarm,
While his own heaven ſurveys the troubled ſcene,
And feels no change, unſhaken and ſerene!
Freedom, in other lands ſcarce known to ſhine,
Pours out a flood of ſplendour upon thine;
Thou haſt as bright an intereſt in her rays,
As ever Roman had in Rome's beſt days.
True freedom is where no reſtraint is known,
That ſcripture, juſtice, and good ſenſe diſown,
Where only vice and injury are tied,
And all from ſhore to ſhore is free beſide.
Such freedom is—and Windſor's hoary towers
Stood trembling at the boldneſs of thy powers,
That won a nymph on that immortal plain,
Like her the fabled Phœbus wooed in vain:
He found the laurel only—happier you
The unfading laurel and the virgin too *!
Now think, if pleaſure have a thought to ſpare;
If God himſelf be not beneath her care;
If buſineſs, conſtant as the wheels of time,
Can pauſe an hour to read a ſerious rhime;
If the new mail thy merchants now receive,
Or expectation of the next give leave;

* Alluding to the grant of Magna Charta, which was extorted from king John by the Barons at Runnymede near Windſor.

Oh think, if chargeable with deep arrears
For ſuch indulgence gilding all thy years,
How much, though long neglected, ſhining yet,
The beams of heavenly truth have ſwelled the debt.
When perſecuting zeal made royal ſport
With tortured innocence in Mary's court,
And Bonner, blithe as ſhepherd at a wake,
Enjoyed the ſhow, and danced about the ſtake;
The ſacred book, its value underſtood,
Received the ſeal of martyrdom in blood.
Thoſe holy men, ſo full of truth and grace,
Seem to reflection of a different race,
Meek, modeſt, venerable, wiſe, ſincere,
In ſuch a cauſe they could not dare to fear;
They could not purchaſe earth with ſuch a prize,
Or ſpare a life too ſhort to reach the ſkies,
From them to thee conveyed along the tide,
Their ſtreaming hearts poured freely when they died;
Thoſe truths, which neither uſe nor years impair,
Invite thee, woo thee, to the bliſs they ſhare.
What dotage will not vanity maintain?
What web too weak to catch a modern brain?
The moles and bats in full aſſembly find,
On ſpecial ſearch, the keen-eyed eagle blind.
And did they dream, and art thou wiſer now!
Prove it—if better, I ſubmit and bow.

Wiſdom and goodneſs are twin-born, one heart
Muſt hold both ſiſters, never ſeen apart.
So then—as darkneſs overſpread the deep,
Ere nature roſe from her eternal ſleep,
And this delightful earth, and that fair ſky,
Leaped out of nothing, called by the Moſt High
By ſuch a change thy darkneſs is made light,
Thy chaos order, and thy weakneſs might;
And He, whoſe power mere nullity obeys,
Who found thee nothing, formed thee for his praiſe.
To praiſe him is to ſerve him, and fulfill,
Doing and ſuffering, his unqueſtioned will;
'Tis to believe what men inſpired of old,
Faithful, and faithfully informed, unfold;
Candid and juſt, with no falſe aim in view,
To take for truth what cannot but be true;
To learn in God's own ſchool the Chriſtian part,
And bind the taſk aſſigned thee to thine heart:
Happy the man there ſeeking and there found,
Happy the nation where ſuch men abound.
How ſhall a verſe impreſs thee? by what name
Shall I adjure thee not to court thy ſhame?
By theirs, whoſe bright example unimpeached
Directs thee to that eminence they reached,
Heroes and worthies of days paſt, thy ſires?
Or his, who touched their hearts with hallowed fires?

Their names, alas! in vain reproach an age,
Whom all the vanities they ſcorned engage!
And his, that ſeraphs tremble at, is hung
Diſgracefully on every trifler's tongue,
Or ſerves the champion in forenſic war
To flouriſh and parade with at the bar.
Pleaſure herſelf perhaps ſuggeſts a plea,
If intereſt move thee, to perſuade even thee;
By every charm, that ſmiles upon her face,
By joys poſſeſſed, and joys ſtill held in chaſe,
If dear ſociety be worth a thought,
And if the feaſt of freedom cloy thee not,
Reflect that theſe, and all that ſeems thine own,
Held by the tenure of his will alone,
Like angels in the ſervice of their Lord,
Remain with thee, or leave thee at his word;
That gratitude and temperance in our uſe
Of what he gives, unſparing and profuſe,
Secure the favour, and enhance the joy,
That thankleſs waſte and wild abuſe deſtroy.
But above all reflect, how cheap ſoe'er
Thoſe rights, that millions envy thee, appear,
And, though reſolved to riſk them, and ſwim down
The tide of pleaſure, heedleſs of his frown,
That bleſſings truly ſacred, and when given
Marked with the ſignature and ſtamp of heaven,

The word of prophecy, thoſe truths divine,
Which make that heaven, if thou deſire it, thine,
(Awful alternative! believed, beloved,
Thy glory, and thy ſhame if unimproved)
Are never long vouchſafed, if puſhed aſide
With cold diſguſt or philoſophic pride!
And that, judicially withdrawn, diſgrace,
Error, and darkneſs occupy their place.

A world is up in arms, and thou, a ſpot
Not quickly found if negligently ſought,
Thy ſoul as ample as thy bounds are ſmall,
Endureſt the brunt, and dareſt defy them all:
And wilt thou join to this bold enterprize
A bolder ſtill, a conteſt with the ſkies?
Remember, if he guard thee and ſecure,
Whoever aſſails thee, thy ſucceſs is ſure;
But if he leave thee, though the ſkill and power
Of nations, ſworn to ſpoil thee and devour,
Were all collected in thy ſingle arm,
And thou couldſt laugh away the fear of harm,
That ſtrength would fail, oppoſed againſt the puſh
And feeble onſet of a pigmy ruſh.

Say not (and if the thought of ſuch defence
Should ſpring within thy boſom, drive it thence)
What nation amongſt all my foes is free
From crimes as baſe as any charged on me?

Their meaſure filled, they too ſhall pay the debt
Which God, though long forborn, will not forget.
But know that wrath divine, when moſt ſevere,
Makes juſtice ſtill the guide of his career,
And will not puniſh, in one mingled crowd,
Them without light, and thee without a cloud.

Muſe, hang this harp upon yon aged beech,
Still murmuring with the ſolemn truths I teach;
And while at intervals a cold blaſt ſings
Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the ſtrings,
My ſoul ſhall ſigh in ſecret, and lament
A nation ſcourged, yet tardy to repent.
I know the warning ſong is ſung in vain,
That few will hear, and fewer heed the ſtrain;
But if a ſweeter voice, and one deſigned
A bleſſing to my country and mankind,
Reclaim the wandering thouſands, and bring home
A flock ſo ſcattered and ſo wont to roam,
Then place it once again between my knees;
The ſound of truth will then be ſure to pleaſe:
And truth alone, wherever my life be caſt,
In ſcenes of plenty or the pining waſte,
Shall be my choſen theme, my glory to the laſt.

HOPE.

———*doceas iter, et sacra ostia pandas.*
VIRG. En. 6.

ASK what is human life—the ſage replies,
With diſappointment lowering in his eyes,
A painful paſſage over a reſtleſs flood,
A vain purſuit of fugitive falſe good,
A ſcene of fancied bliſs and heart-felt care,
Cloſing at laſt in darkneſs and deſpair.
The poor, inured to drudgery and diſtreſs,
Act without aim, think little, and feel leſs,
And no where, but in feigned Arcadian ſcenes,
Taſte happineſs, or know what pleaſure means.
Riches are paſſed away from hand to hand,
As fortune, vice, or folly may command;
As in a dance the pair that take the lead
Turn downward, and the loweſt pair ſucceed,

So ſhifting and ſo various is the plan,
By which Heaven rules the mixt affairs of man
Viciſſitude wheels round the motley crowd,
The rich grow poor, the poor become purſe-proud;
Buſineſs is labour, and man's weakneſs ſuch,
Pleaſure is labour too, and tires as much,
The very ſenſe of it foregoes its uſe,
By repetition palled, by age obtuſe.
Youth loſt in diſſipation we deplore,
Through life's ſad remnant, what no ſighs reſtore;
Our years, a fruitleſs race without a prize,
Too many, yet too few to make us wiſe.
Dangling his cane about, and taking ſnuff,
Lothario cries, What philoſophic ſtuff—
Oh querulous and weak!—whoſe uſeleſs brain
Once thought of nothing, and now thinks in vain;
Whoſe eye reverted weeps over all the paſt,
Whoſe proſpect ſhows thee a diſheartening waſte;
Would age in thee reſign his wintry reign,
And youth invigorate that frame again,
Renewed deſire would grace with other ſpeech
Joys always prized, when placed within our reach.
For lift thy palſied head, ſhake off the gloom,
That overhangs the borders of thy tomb,
See nature gay, as when ſhe firſt began
With ſmiles alluring her admirer man;

She ſpreads the morning over eaſtern hills,
Earth glitters with the drops the night diſtils;
The ſun obedient at her call appears,
To fling his glories over the robe ſhe wears;
Banks clothed with flowers, groves filled with ſprightly
ſounds,
The yellow tilth, green meads, rocks, riſing grounds,
Streams edged with oſiers, fattening every field
Wherever they flow, now ſeen and now concealed;
From the blue rim where ſkies and mountains meet,
Down to the very turf beneath thy feet,
Ten thouſand charms, that only fools deſpiſe,
Or pride can look at with indifferent eyes,
All ſpeak one language, all with one ſweet voice
Cry to her univerſal realm, Rejoice!
Man feels the ſpur of paſſions and deſires,
And ſhe gives largely more than he requires;
Not that his hours devoted all to care,
Hollow-eyed abſtinence, and lean deſpair,
The wretch may pine, while to his ſmell, taſte, ſight,
She holds a paradiſe of rich delight;
But gently to rebuke his awkward fear,
To prove that what ſhe gives, ſhe gives ſincere,
To baniſh heſitation, and proclaim
His happineſs, her dear, her only aim.

'Tis grave philoſophy's abſurdeſt dream,
That heaven's intentions are not what they ſeem,
That only ſhadows are diſpenſed below,
And earth has no reality but woe.
Thus things terreſtrial wear a different hue,
As youth or age perſuades; and neither true.
So Flora's wreath through coloured cryſtal ſeen,
The roſe or lily appears blue or green,
But ſtill the imputed tints are thoſe alone
The medium repreſents, and not their own.
To riſe at noon, ſit ſlipſhod and undreſſed,
To read the news, or fiddle, as ſeems beſt,
Till half the world comes rattling at his door,
To fill the dull vacuity till four;
And, juſt when evening turns the blue vault gray,
To ſpend two hours in dreſſing for the day;
To make the ſun a bauble without uſe,
Save for the fruits his heavenly beams produce;
Quite to forget, or deem it worth no thought,
Who bids him ſhine, or if he ſhine or not;
Through mere neceſſity to cloſe his eyes
Juſt when the larks and when the ſhepherds riſe;
Is ſuch a life, ſo tediouſly the ſame,
So void of all utility or aim,
That poor JONQUIL, with almoſt every breath
Sighs for his exit, vulgarly called death:

For he, with all his follies, has a mind
Not yet ſo blank, or faſhionably blind,
But now and then, perhaps a feeble ray
Of diſtant wiſdom ſhoots acroſs his way,
By which he reads, that life without a plan,
As uſeleſs as the moment it began,
Serves merely as a foil for diſcontent
To thrive in; an incumbrance ere half ſpent.
Oh wearineſs beyond what aſſes feel,
That tread the circuit of the ciſtern wheel;
A dull rotation, never at a ſtay,
Yeſterday's face twin image of to-day;
While converſation, an exhauſted ſtock,
Grows drowſy as the clicking of a clock.
No need, he cries, of gravity ſtuffed out
With academic dignity devout,
To read wiſe lectures, vanity the text:
Proclaim the remedy, ye learned, next;
For truth, ſelf-evident, with pomp impreſſed,
In vanity ſurpaſſing all the reſt.

That remedy, not hid in deeps profound,
Yet ſeldom ſought where only to be found,
While paſſion turns aſide from its due ſcope
The inquirer's aim, that remedy is hope.
Life is his gift, from whom whatever life needs,
With every good and perfect gift proceeds;

Beſtowed on man, like all that we partake,
Royally, freely, for his bounty ſake;
Tranſient indeed, as is the fleeting hour,
And yet the ſeed of an immortal flower;
Deſigned in honour of his endleſs love,
To fill with fragrance his abode above;
No trifle, howſoever ſhort it ſeem,
And, howſoever ſhadowy, no dream;
Its value, what no thought can aſcertain,
Nor all an angel's eloquence explain,
Men deal with life as children with their play,
Who firſt miſuſe, then caſt their toys away;
Live to no ſober purpoſe, and contend
That their Creator had no ſerious end.
When God and man ſtand oppoſite in view,
Man's diſappointment muſt of courſe enſue.
The juſt Creator condeſcends to write,
In beams of inextinguiſhable light,
His names of wiſdom, goodneſs, power, and love,
On all that blooms below, or ſhines above;
To catch the wandering notice of mankind,
And teach the world, if not perverſely blind,
His gracious attributes, and prove the ſhare
His offspring hold in his paternal care.
If, led from earthly things to things divine,
His creature thwart not his auguſt deſign,

Then praiſe is heard inſtead of reaſoning pride,
And captious cavil and complaint ſubſide.
Nature, employed in her allotted place,
Is hand-maid to the purpoſes of grace;
By good vouchſafed makes known ſuperior good,
And bliſs not ſeen by bleſſings underſtood:
That bliſs, revealed in ſcripture, with a glow
Bright as the covenant-enſuring bow,
Fires all his feelings with a noble ſcorn
Of ſenſual evil, and thus Hope is born.
Hope ſets the ſtamp of vanity on all,
That men have deemed ſubſtantial ſince the fall,
Yet has the wondrous virtue to educe
From emptineſs itſelf a real uſe;
And while ſhe takes, as at a father's hand,
What health and ſober appetite demand,
From fading good derives, with chemic art,
That laſting happineſs, a thankful heart.
Hope, with uplifted foot, ſet free from earth,
Pants for the place of her ethereal birth,
On ſteady wings ſails through the immenſe abyſs,
Plucks amaranthine joys from bowers of bliſs,
And crowns the ſoul, while yet a mourner here,
With wreaths like thoſe triumphant ſpirits wear.
Hope, as an anchor firm and ſure, holds faſt
The Chriſtian veſſel, and defies the blaſt.

Hope! nothing elſe can nouriſh and ſecure
His new-born virtues, and preſerve him pure.
Hope! let the wretch, once conſcious of the joy,
Whom now deſpairing agonies deſtroy,
Speak, for he can, and none ſo well as he,
What treaſures centre, what delights in thee.
Had he the gems, the ſpices, and the land,
That boaſts the treaſure, all at his command;
The fragrant grove, the ineſtimable mine,
Were light, when weighed againſt one ſmile of thine.
Though claſped and cradled in his nurſe's arms,
He ſhines with all a cherub's artleſs charms.
Man is the genuine offſpring of revolt,
Stubborn and ſturdy, a wild aſs's colt;
His paſſions, like the watery ſtores that ſleep
Beneath the ſmiling ſurface of the deep,
Wait but the laſhes of a wintry ſtorm,
To frown and roar, and ſhake his feeble form.
From infancy through childhood's giddy maze,
Froward at ſchool, and fretful in his plays,
The puny tyrant burns to ſubjugate
The free republic of the whip-gig ſtate.
If one, his equal in athletic frame,
Or, more provoking ſtill, of nobler name,
Dare ſtep acroſs his arbitrary views,
An Iliad, only not in verſe, enſues:

The little Greeks look trembling at the ſcales,
Till the beſt tongue, or heavieſt hand prevails.
Now ſee him launched into the world at large;
If prieſt, ſupinely droning over his charge,
Their fleece his pillow, and his weekly drawl,
Though ſhort, too long, the price he pays for all.
If lawyer, loud whatever cauſe he plead,
But proudeſt of the worſt, if that ſucceed.
Perhaps a grave phyſician, gathering fees,
Punctually paid for lengthening out diſeaſe;
No COTTON, whoſe humanity ſheds rays,
That make ſuperior ſkill his ſecond praiſe.
If arms engage him, he devotes to ſport
His date of life, ſo likely to be ſhort;
A ſoldier may be any thing, if brave,
So may a tradeſman, if not quite a knave.
Such ſtuff the world is made of; and mankind
To paſſion, intereſt, pleaſure, whim, reſigned,
Inſiſt on, as if each were his own pope,
Forgiveneſs, and the privilege of hope.
But conſcience, in ſome awful ſilent hour,
When captivating luſts have loſt their power,
Perhaps when ſickneſs, or ſome fearful dream,
Reminds him of religion, hated theme!
Starts from the down, on which ſhe lately ſlept,
And tells of laws deſpiſed, at leaſt not kept:

Shows with a pointing finger but no noiſe
A pale proceſſion of paſt ſinful joys,
All witneſſes of bleſſings foully ſcorned,
And life abuſed, and not to be ſuborned.
Mark theſe, ſhe ſays; theſe ſummoned from afar,
Begin their march to meet thee at the bar;
There find a Judge inexorably juſt,
And periſh there, as all preſumption muſt.
Peace be to thoſe (ſuch peace as earth can give)
Who live in pleaſure, dead even while they live;
Born capable indeed of heavenly truth;
But down to lateſt age, from earlieſt youth,
Their mind a wilderneſs through want of care,
The plough of wiſdom never entering there.
Peace (if inſenſibility may claim
A right to the meek honours of her name)
To men of pedigree, their noble race,
Emulous always of the neareſt place
To any throne, except the throne of grace.
Let cottagers and unenlightened ſwains
Revere the laws they dream that heaven ordains;
Reſort on Sundays to the houſe of prayer,
And aſk, and fancy they find, bleſſings there.
Themſelves, perhaps, when weary they retreat
To enjoy cool nature in a country ſeat,

To exchange the centre of a thouſand trades,
For clumps, and lawns, and temples, and caſcades,
May now and then their velvet cuſhions take,
And ſeem to pray for good example ſake;
Judging, in charity no doubt, the town
Pious enough, and having need of none.
Kind ſouls! to teach their tenantry to prize
What they themſelves, without remorſe, deſpiſe:
Nor hope have they, nor fear, of aught to come,
As well for them had prophecy been dumb;
They could have held the conduct they purſue,
Had Paul of Tarſus lived and died a Jew;
And truth, propoſed to reaſoners wiſe as they,
Is a pearl caſt—completely caſt away.

They die.—Death lends them, pleaſed, and as in ſport,
All the grim honours of his ghaſtly court.
Far other paintings grace the chamber now,
Where late we ſaw the mimic landſcape glow:
The buſy heralds hang the ſable ſcene
With mournful eſcutcheons, and dim lamps between;
Proclaim their titles to the crowd around,
But they that wore them move not at the ſound;
The coronet, placed idly at their head,
Adds nothing now to the degraded dead,
And even the ſtar, that glitters on the bier,
Can only ſay—Nobility lies here.

Peace to all ſuch—'twere pity to offend
By uſeleſs cenſure, whom we cannot mend;
Life without hope can cloſe but in deſpair,
'Twas there we found them, and muſt leave them there.
As, when two pilgrims in a foreſt ſtray,
Both may be loſt, yet each in his own way;
So fares it with the multitudes beguiled
In vain opinion's waſte and dangerous wild;
Ten thouſand rove the brakes and thorns among,
Some eaſtward, and ſome weſtward, and all wrong.
But here, alas! the fatal difference lies,
Each man's belief is right in his own eyes;
And he that blames what they have blindly choſe,
Incurs reſentment for the love he ſhows.
Say botaniſt, within whoſe province fall
The cedar and the hyſſop on the wall,
Of all that deck the lanes, the fields, the bowers,
What parts the kindred tribes of weeds and flowers?
Sweet ſcent, or lovely form, or both combined,
Diſtinguiſh every cultivated kind;
The want of both denotes a meaner breed,
And Chloé from her garland picks the weed.
Thus hopes of every ſort, whatever ſect
Eſteem them, ſow them, rear them, and protect,
If wild in nature, and not duly found,
Gethſemane! in thy dear hallowed ground,

That cannot bear the blaze of ſcripture light,
Nor cheer the ſpirit, nor refreſh the ſight,
Nor animate the ſoul to Chriſtian deeds,
(Oh caſt them from thee!) are weeds, arrant weeds.
  Ethelred's houſe, the centre of ſix ways,
Diverging each from each, like equal rays,
Himſelf as bountiful as April rains,
Lord paramount of the ſurrounding plains,
Would give relief of bed and board to none,
But gueſts that ſought it in the appointed ONE.
And they might enter at his open door,
Even till his ſpacious hall would hold no more.
He ſent a ſervant forth by every road,
To ſound his horn and publiſh it abroad,
That all might mark—knight, menial, high and low,
An ordinance it concerned them much to know.
If after all ſome headſtrong hardy lout
Would diſobey, though ſure to be ſhut out,
Could he with reaſon murmur at his caſe,
Himſelf ſole author of his own diſgrace?
No! the decree was juſt and without flaw;
And he that made, had right to make, the law;
His ſovereign power and pleaſure unreſtrained,
The wrong was his, who wrongfully complained.
  Yet half mankind maintain a churliſh ſtrife
With him the Donor of eternal life,

Becauſe the deed, by which his love confirms
The largeſs he beſtows, preſcribes the terms.
Compliance with his will your lot enſures,
Accept it only, and the boon is your's.
And ſure it is as kind to ſmile and give,
As with a frown to ſay, Do this, and live.
Love is not pedlar's trumpery bought and ſold:
He *will* give freely, or he *will* withhold;
His ſoul abhors a mercenary thought,
And him as deeply who abhors it not;
He ſtipulates indeed, but merely this,
That man will freely take an unbought bliſs,
Will truſt him for a faithful generous part,
Nor ſet a price upon a willing heart.
Of all the ways that ſeem to promiſe fair,
To place you where his ſaints his preſence ſhare,
This only can; for this plain cauſe, expreſſed
In terms as plain, himſelf has ſhut the reſt.
But oh the ſtrife, the bickering, and debate,
The tidings of unpurchaſed heaven create!
The flirted fan, the bridle and the toſs,
All ſpeakers, yet all language at a loſs.
From ſtuccoed walls ſmart arguments rebound;
And beaus, adept in every thing profound,
Die of diſdain, or whiſtle off the ſound.

Such is the clamour of rooks, daws, and kites,
The explosion of the levelled tube excites,
Where mouldering abbey-walls overhang the glade,
And oaks coeval spread a mournful shade,
The screaming nations, hovering in mid air,
Loudly resent the stranger's freedom there,
And seem to warn him never to repeat
His bold intrusion on their dark retreat.
Adieu, Vinosa cries, ere yet he sips
The purple bumper trembling at his lips,
Adieu to all morality! if grace
Make works a vain ingredient in the case.
The Christian hope is—Waiter draw the cork—
If I mistake not—Blockhead! with a fork!—
Without good works, whatever some may boast,
Mere folly and delusion—Sir, your toast.
My firm persuasion is, at least sometimes,
That heaven will weigh man's virtues and his crimes
With nice attention, in a righteous scale,
And save or damn as these or those prevail,
I plant my foot upon this ground of trust,
And silence every fear with—God is just.
But if perchance on some dull drizzling day
A thought intrude that says, or seems to say,
If thus the important cause is to be tried,
Suppose the beam should dip on the wrong side;

I ſoon recover from theſe needleſs frights,
And God is merciful—ſets all to rights.
Thus between juſtice, as my prime ſupport,
And mercy, fled to as the laſt reſort,
I glide and ſteal along with heaven in view,
And, pardon me, the bottle ſtands with you.
I never will believe, the Colonel cries,
The ſanguinary ſchemes that ſome deviſe,
Who make the good Creator on their plan
A being of leſs equity than man.
If appetite, or what divines call luſt,
Which men comply with, even becauſe they muſt,
Be puniſhed with perdition, who is pure?
Then their's no doubt, as well as mine, is ſure.
If ſentence of eternal pain belong
To every ſudden ſlip and tranſient wrong,
Then heaven enjoins the fallible and frail
An hopeleſs taſk, and damns them if they fail.
My creed (whatever ſome creed-makers mean
By Athanaſian nonſenſe, or Nicene)
My creed is, he is ſafe that does his beſt,
And death's a doom ſufficient for the reſt.
Right, ſays an enſign; and for aught I ſee,
Your faith and mine ſubſtantially agree;
The beſt of every man's performance here
Is to diſcharge the duties of his ſphere.

A lawyer's dealings ſhould be juſt and fair,
Honeſty ſhines with great advantage there.
Faſting and prayer ſit well upon a prieſt,
A decent caution and reſerve at leaſt.
A ſoldier's beſt is courage in the field,
With nothing here that wants to be conceal'd.
Manly deportment, gallant, eaſy, gay;
An hand as liberal as the light of day.
The ſoldier thus endowed, who never ſhrinks,
Nor cloſets up his thoughts, whatever he thinks,
Who ſcorns to do an injury by ſtealth,
Muſt go to heaven—and I muſt drink his health.
Sir Smug, he cries, (for loweſt at the board,
Juſt made fifth chaplain of his patron lord,
His ſhoulders witneſſing by many a ſhrug
How much his feelings ſuffered, ſat Sir Smug)
Your office is to winnow falſe from true;
Come, prophet, drink, and tell us, What think you?
Sighing and ſmiling as he takes his glaſs,
Which they that woo preferment rarely paſs,
Fallible man, the church-bred youth replies,
Is ſtill found fallible, however wiſe;
And differing judgments ſerve but to declare
That truth lies ſomewhere, if we knew but where.
Of all it ever was my lot to read,
Of critics now alive, or long ſince dead,

The book of all the world that charmed me moſt
Was, well-a-day, the title page was loſt;
The writer well remarks, an heart that knows
To take with gratitude what heaven beſtows,
With prudence always ready at our call,
To guide our uſe of it, is all in all.
Doubtleſs it is.—To which, of my own ſtore,
I ſuperadd a few eſſentials more;
But theſe, excuſe the liberty I take,
I wave juſt now, for converſation ſake.——
Spoke like an oracle, they all exclaim,
And add Right Reverend to Smug's honoured name.
And yet our lot is given us in a land,
Where buſy arts are never at a ſtand;
Where ſcience points her teleſcopic eye,
Familiar with the wonders of the ſky;
Where bold inquiry, diving out of ſight,
Brings many a precious pearl of truth to light;
Where nought eludes the perſevering queſt,
That faſhion, taſte, or luxury, ſuggeſt.
But above all in her own light arrayed,
See mercy's grand apocalypſe diſplayed!
The ſacred book no longer ſuffers wrong,
Bound in the fetters of an unknown tongue;
But ſpeaks with plainneſs, art could never mend,
What ſimpleſt minds can ſooneſt comprehend.

God gives the word, the preachers throng around,
Live from his lips, and ſpread the glorious ſound:
That ſound beſpeaks ſalvation on her way,
The trumpet of a life-reſtoring day;
'Tis heard where England's eaſtern glory ſhines,
And in the gulphs of her Cornubian mines.
And ſtill it ſpreads. See Germany ſend forth
Her ſons * to pour it on the fartheſt north:
Fired with a zeal peculiar, *they* defy
The rage and rigour of a polar ſky,
And plant ſucceſsfully ſweet Sharon's roſe
On icy plains, and in eternal ſnows.

Oh bleſt within the enclofure of your rocks,
Not herds have ye to boaſt, nor bleating flocks;
No fertilizing ſtreams your fields divide,
That ſhow reverſed the villas on their ſide;
No groves have ye; no cheerful ſound of bird,
Or voice of turtle, in your land is heard;
Nor grateful eglantine regales the ſmell
Of thoſe, that walk at evening where ye dwell:
But winter, armed with terrors here unknown,
Sits abſolute on his unſhaken throne;
Piles up his ſtores amidſt the frozen waſte,
And bids the mountains he has built ſtand faſt;

* The Moravian Miſſionaries in Greenland. Vide Krantz.

Beckons the legions of his ſtorms away
From happier ſcenes, to make your land a prey;
Proclaims the ſoil a conqueſt he has won,
And ſcorns to ſhare it with the diſtant ſun.
—Yet truth is your's, remote, unenvied iſle!
And peace, the genuine offspring of her ſmile;
The pride of lettered ignorance, that binds
In chains of error our accompliſhed minds,
That decks, with all the ſplendour of the true,
A falſe religion, is unknown to you.
Nature indeed vouchſafes for our delight
The ſweet viciſſitudes of day and night;
Soft airs and genial moiſture feed and cheer
Field, fruit, and flower, and every creature here;
But brighter beams, than his who fires the ſkies,
Have riſen at length on your admiring eyes,
That ſhoot into your darkeſt caves the day,
From which our nicer optics turn away.
Here ſee the encouragement grace gives to vice,
The dire effect of mercy without price!
What were they? what ſome fools are made by art,
They were by nature, atheiſts, head and heart.
The groſs idolatry blind heathens teach
Was too refined for them, beyond their reach.
Not even the glorious ſun, though men revere
The monarch moſt, that ſeldom will appear,

And though his beams, that quicken where they ſhine,
May claim ſome right to be eſteemed divine,
Not even the ſun, deſirable as rare,
Could bend one knee, engage one votary there;
They were, what baſe credulity believes
True Chriſtians are, diſſemblers, drunkards, thieves.
The full-gorged ſavage, at his naufeous feaſt
Spent half the darkneſs, and ſnored out the reſt,
Was one, whom juſtice on an equal plan
Denouncing death upon the ſins of man,
Might almoſt have indulged with an eſcape,
Chargeable only with an human ſhape.

What are they now?—Morality may ſpare
Her grave concern, her kind ſuſpicions there:
The wretch, who once ſang wildly, danced and laughed,
And ſucked in dizzy madneſs with his draught,
Has wept a ſilent flood, reverſed his ways,
Is ſober, meek, benevolent, and prays,
Feeds ſparingly, communicates his ſtore,
Abhors the craft he boaſted of before,
And he that ſtole has learned to ſteal no more.
Well ſpake the prophet, Let the deſert ſing,
Where ſprang the thorn, the ſpiry fir ſhall ſpring,
And where unſightly and rank thiſtles grew,
Shall grow the myrtle and luxuriant yew.

Go now, and with important tone demand
On what foundation virtue is to ſtand,
If ſelf-exalting claims be turned adrift,
And grace be grace indeed, and life a gift;
The poor reclaimed inhabitant, his eyes
Gliſtening at once with pity and ſurpriſe,
Amazed that ſhadows ſhould obſcure the ſight
Of one, whoſe birth was in a land of light,
Shall anſwer, Hope, ſweet hope, has ſet me free,
And made all pleaſures elſe mere droſs to me.
Theſe, amidſt ſcenes as waſte as if denied
The common care that waits on all beſide,
Wild as if nature there, void of all good,
Played only gambols in a frantic mood,
(Yet charge not heavenly ſkill with having planned
A play-thing world, unworthy of his hand;)
Can ſee his love, though ſecret evil lurks
In all we touch, ſtamped plainly on his works;
Deem life a bleſſing with its numerous woes,
Nor ſpurn away a gift a God beſtows.
Hard taſk indeed over arctic ſeas to roam!
Is hope exotic? grows it not at home?
Yes, but an object, bright as orient morn,
May preſs the eye too cloſely to be borne;
A diſtant virtue we can all confeſs,
It hurts our pride, and moves our envy, leſs.

Leucopomus (beneath well-founding Greek
I ſlur a name a poet muſt not ſpeak)
Stood pilloried on infamy's high ſtage,
And bore the pelting ſcore of half an age;
The very butt of ſlander, and the blot
For every dart that malice ever ſhot.
The man that mentioned *him* at once diſmiſſed
All mercy from his lips, and ſneered and hiſſed;
His crimes were ſuch as Sodom never knew,
And perjury ſtood up to ſwear all true;
His aim was miſchief, and his zeal pretence,
His ſpeech rebellion againſt common ſenſe;
A knave when tried on honeſty's plain rule,
And when by that of reaſon a mere fool;
The world's beſt comfort was, his doom was paſſed;
Die when he might, he muſt be damned at laſt.
Now truth perform thine office; waft aſide
The curtain drawn by prejudice and pride,
Reveal, (the man is dead) to wondering eyes
This more than monſter in his proper guiſe.
He loved the world that hated him: the tear
That dropped upon his Bible was ſincere:
Aſſailed by ſcandal and the tongue of ſtrife,
His only anſwer was, a blameleſs life;
And he that forged, and he that threw the dart,
Had each a brother's intereſt in his heart.

Paul's love of Chriſt, and ſteadineſs unbribed,
Were copied cloſe in him, and well tranſcribed.
He followed Paul; his zeal a kindred flame,
His apoſtolic charity the ſame.
Like him, croſſed cheerfully tempeſtuous ſeas,
Forſaking country, kindred, friends, and eaſe;
Like him he laboured, and like him content
To bear it, ſuffered ſhame wherever he went.
Bluſh calumny! and write upon his tomb,
If honeſt eulogy can ſpare thee room,
Thy deep repentance of thy thouſand lies,
Which aimed at him, have pierced the offended ſkies!
And ſay, Blot out my ſin, confeſſed, deplored,
Againſt thine image, in thy ſaint, oh Lord!
No blinder bigot, I maintain it ſtill,
Than he who muſt have pleaſure, come what will:
He laughs, whatever weapon truth may draw,
And deems her ſharp artillery mere ſtraw.
Scripture indeed is plain; but God and he
On ſcripture ground are ſure to diſagree;
Some wiſer rule muſt teach him how to live,
Than this his Maker has ſeen fit to give;
Supple and flexible as Indian cane,
To take the bend his appetites ordain;
Contrived to ſuit frail nature's crazy caſe,
And reconcile his luſts with ſaving grace.

By this, with nice precision of deſign,
He draws upon life's map a zig-zag line,
That ſhows how far 'tis ſafe to follow ſin,
And where his danger and God's wrath begin.
By this he forms, as pleaſed he ſports along,
His well poiſed eſtimate of right and wrong;
And finds the modiſh manners of the day,
Though looſe, as harmleſs as an infant's play.
Build by whatever plan caprice decrees,
With what materials, on what ground you pleaſe;
Your hope ſhall ſtand unblamed, perhaps admired,
If not that hope the ſcripture has required.
The ſtrange conceits, vain projects, and wild dreams,
With which hypocriſy for ever teems,
(Though other follies ſtrike the public eye,
And raiſe a laugh) paſs unmoleſted by;
But if, unblameable in word and thought,
A *man* ariſe, a man whom God has taught,
With all Elijah's dignity of tone,
And all the love of the beloved John,
To ſtorm the citadels they build in air,
And ſmite the untempered wall; 'tis death to ſpare.
To ſweep away all refuges of lies,
And place, inſtead of quirks themſelves deviſe,
LAMA SABACTHANI before their eyes;

To prove that without Chriſt all gain is loſs,
All hope deſpair, that ſtands not on his croſs;
Except the few his God may have impreſſed,
A tenfold frenzy ſeizes all the reſt.

Throughout mankind, the Chriſtian kind at leaſt,
There dwells a conſciouſneſs in every breaſt,
That folly ends where genuine hope begins,
And he that finds his heaven muſt loſe his ſins.
Nature oppoſes with her utmoſt force,
This riving ſtroke, this ultimate divorce;
And while religion ſeems to be her view,
Hates with a deep ſincerity *the true:*
For this, of all that ever influenced man,
Since Abel worſhipped, or the world began,
This only ſpares no luſt, admits no plea,
But makes him, if at all, completely free;
Sounds forth the ſignal, as ſhe mounts her car,
Of an eternal, univerſal war;
Rejects all treaty, penetrates all wiles,
Scorns with the ſame indifference frowns and ſmiles;
Drives through the realms of ſin, where riot reels,
And grinds his crown beneath her burning wheels!
Hence all that is in man, pride, paſſion, art,
Powers of the mind, and feelings of the heart,
Inſenſible of truth's almighty charms,
Starts at her firſt approach, and ſounds to arms!

While bigotry, with well-diſſembled fears,
His eyes ſhut faſt, his fingers in his ears,
Mighty to parry and puſh by God's word
With ſenſeleſs noiſe, his argument the ſword,
Pretends a zeal for godlineſs and grace,
And ſpits abhorrence in the Chriſtian's face.
Parent of hope, immortal truth! make known
Thy deathleſs wreaths and triumphs all thine own:
The ſilent progreſs of thy power is ſuch,
Thy means ſo feeble, and deſpiſed ſo much,
That few believe the wonders thou haſt wrought,
And none can teach them but whom thou haſt taught.
Oh ſee me ſworn to ſerve thee, and command
A painter's ſkill into a poet's hand,
That while I trembling trace a work divine,
Fancy may ſtand aloof from the deſign,
And light, and ſhade, and every ſtroke be thine.
If ever thou haſt felt another's pain,
If ever when he ſighed haſt ſighed again,
If ever on thy eye-lid ſtood the tear,
That pity had engendered, drop one here.
This man was happy—had the world's good word,
And with it every joy it can afford;
Friendſhip and love ſeemed tenderly at ſtrife,
Which moſt ſhould ſweeten his untroubled life;

Politely learned, and of a gentle race,
Good-breeding and good ſenſe gave all a grace,
And whether at the toilette of the fair
He laughed and trifled, made him welcome there,
Or if in maſculine debate he ſhared,
Enſured him mute attention and regard.
Alas how changed! Expreſſive of his mind,
His eyes are ſunk, arms folded, head reclined;
Thoſe awful ſyllables, hell, death, and ſin,
Though whiſpered, plainly tell what works within;
That conſcience there performs her proper part,
And writes a doomſday ſentence on his heart;
Forſaking, and forſaken of all friends,
He now perceives where earthly pleaſure ends;
Hard taſk! for one who lately knew no care,
And harder ſtill as learnt beneath deſpair;
His hours no longer paſs unmarked away,
A dark importance ſaddens every day;
He hears the notice of the clock perplexed,
And cries, perhaps eternity ſtrikes next;
Sweet muſic is no longer muſic here,
And laughter ſounds like madneſs in his ear:
His grief the world of all her power diſarms,
Wine has no taſte, and beauty has no charms:
God's holy word, once trivial in his view,
Now by the voice of his experience true,

Seems, as it is, the fountain whence alone
Muſt ſpring that hope he pants to make his own.
Now let the bright reverſe be known abroad;
Say man's a worm, and power belongs to God.
As when a felon, whom his country's laws
Have juſtly doomed for ſome atrocious cauſe,
Expects in darkneſs and heart-chilling fears,
The ſhameful cloſe of all his miſpent years;
If chance, on heavy pinions ſlowly borne,
A tempeſt uſher in the dreadful morn,
Upon his dungeon walls the lightning play,
The thunder ſeems to ſummon him away,
The warder at the door his key applies,
Shoots back the bolt, and all his courage dies:
If then, juſt then, all thoughts of mercy loſt,
When hope, long lingering, at laſt yields the ghoſt,
The ſound of pardon pierce his ſtartled ear,
He drops at once his fetters and his fear;
A tranſport glows in all he looks and ſpeaks,
And the firſt thankful tears bedew his cheeks.
Joy, far ſuperior joy, that much outweighs
The comfort of a few poor added days,
Invades, poſſeſſes, and overwhelms the ſoul
Of him, whom hope has with a touch made whole.
'Tis heaven, all heaven deſcending on the wings
Of the glad legions of the King of kings;

'Tis more—'tis God diffuſed through every part,
'Tis God himſelf triumphant in his heart.
Oh welcome now the ſun's once hated light,
His noon-day beams were never half ſo bright.
Not kindred minds alone are called to employ
Their hours, their days, in liſtening to his joy;
Unconſcious nature, all that he ſurveys,
Rocks, groves, and ſtreams, muſt join him in his praiſe.
Theſe are thy glorious works, eternal truth,
The ſcoff of withered age and beardleſs youth;
Theſe move the cenſure and illiberal grin
Of fools, that hate thee and delight in ſin:
But theſe ſhall laſt when night has quenched the pole,
And heaven is all departed as a ſcroll.
And when, as juſtice has long ſince decreed,
This earth ſhall blaze, and a new world ſucceed,
Then theſe thy glorious works, and they who ſhare
That hope, which can alone exclude deſpair,
Shall live exempt from weakneſs and decay,
The brighteſt wonders of an endleſs day.
Happy the bard, (if that fair name belong
To him, that blends no fable with his ſong)
Whoſe lines uniting, by an honeſt art,
The faithful monitor's and poet's part,
Seek to delight, that they may mend mankind,
And while they captivate, inform the mind;

Still happier, if he till a thankful ſoil,
And fruit reward his honourable toil:
But happier far, who comfort thoſe, that wait
To hear plain truth at Judah's hallowed gate:
Their language ſimple, as their manners meek,
No ſhining ornaments have they to ſeek;
Nor labour they, nor time nor talents waſte,
In ſorting flowers to ſuit a fickle taſte;
But while they ſpeak the wiſdom of the ſkies,
Which art can only darken and diſguiſe,
The abundant harveſt, recompenſe divine,
Repays their work—the gleaning only mine.

CHARITY.

Quo nihil majus meliusve terris
Fata donavere, bonique divi;
Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum
Tempora priscum.
HOR. Lib. IV. Ode 2.

FAIREST and foremoſt of the train, that wait
On man's moſt dignified and happieſt ſtate,
Whether we name thee Charity or love,
Chief grace below, and all in all above,
Proſper (I preſs thee with a powerful plea)
A taſk I venture on, impelled by thee:
Oh never ſeen but in thy bleſt effects,
Or felt but in the ſoul that heaven ſelects;
Who ſeeks to praiſe thee, and to make thee known
To other hearts, muſt have thee in his own.
Come, prompt me with benevolent deſires,
Teach me to kindle at thy gentle fires,
And though diſgraced and ſlighted, to redeem
A poet's name, by making thee the theme.

God, working ever on a ſocial plan,
By various ties attaches man to man:
He made at firſt, though free and unconfined,
One man the common father of the kind;
That every tribe, though placed as he ſees beſt,
Where ſeas or deſerts part them from the reſt,
Differing in language, manners, or in face,
Might feel themſelves allied to all the race.
When Cook—lamented, and with tears as juſt
As ever mingled with heroic duſt,
Steered Britain's oak into a world unknown,
And in his country's glory fought his own,
Wherever he found man, to nature true,
The rights of man were ſacred in his view;
He ſoothed with gifts, and greeted with a ſmile,
The ſimple native of the new-found iſle;
He ſpurned the wretch, that ſlighted or withſtood
The tender argument of kindred blood,
Nor would endure that any ſhould controul
His free-born brethren of the ſouthern pole.
But though ſome nobler minds a law reſpect,
That none ſhall with impunity neglect,
In baſer ſouls unnumbered evils meet,
To thwart its influence, and its end defeat.
While Cook is loved for ſavage lives he ſaved,
See Cortez odious for a world enſlaved!

Where waſt thou then, ſweet Charity? where then,
Thou tutelary friend of helpleſs men?
Waſt thou in monkiſh cells and nunneries found,
Or building hoſpitals on Engliſh ground?
No.—Mammon makes the world his legatee
Through fear, not love; and heaven abhors the fee.
Wherever found, (and all men need thy care)
Nor age nor infancy could find thee there.
The hand, that ſlew till it could ſlay no more,
Was glued to the ſword-hilt with Indian gore.
Their prince, as juſtly ſeated on his throne
As vain imperial Philip on his own,
Tricked out of all his royalty by art,
That ſtripped him bare, and broke his honeſt heart,
Died by the ſentence of a ſhaven prieſt,
For ſcorning what they taught him to deteſt.
How dark the veil, that intercepts the blaze
Of heaven's myſterious purpoſes and ways;
God ſtood not, though he ſeemed to ſtand, aloof;
And at this hour the conqueror feels the proof:
The wreath he won drew down an inſtant curſe,
The fretting plague is in the public purſe,
The cankered ſpoil corrodes the pining ſtate,
Starved by that indolence their mines create.
Oh could their ancient Incas riſe again,
How would they take up Iſrael's taunting ſtrain!

Art thou too fallen Iberia? Do we see
The robber and the murderer weak as we?
Thou, that haft wafted earth, and dared defpife
Alike the wrath and mercy of the fkies,
Thy pomp is in the grave, thy glory laid
Low in the pits thine avarice has made.
We come with joy from our eternal reft,
To fee the oppreffor in his turn oppreffed.
Art thou the god, the thunder of whofe hand
Rolled over all our defolated land,
Shook principalities and kingdoms down,
And made the mountains tremble at his frown?
The fword fhall light upon thy boafted powers,
And wafte them, as thy fword has wafted ours.
'Tis thus Omnipotence his law fulfils,
And vengeance executes what juftice wills.

Again—the band of commerce was defigned
To affociate all the branches of mankind;
And if a boundlefs plenty be the robe,
Trade is the golden girdle of the globe.
Wife to promote whatever end he means,
God opens fruitful nature's various fcenes:
Each climate needs what other climes produce,
And offers fomething to the general ufe;
No land but liftens to the common call,
And in return receives fupply from all.

This genial intercourſe, and mutual aid,
Cheers what were elſe an univerſal ſhade,
Calls nature from her ivy mantled den,
And ſoftens human rock-work into men.
Ingenious Art with her expreſſive face,
Steps forth to faſhion and refine the race;
Not only fills neceſſity's demand,
But overcharges her capacious hand:
Capricious taſte itſelf can crave no more,
Than ſhe ſupplies from her abounding ſtore:
She ſtrikes out all that luxury can aſk,
And gains new vigour at her endleſs taſk.
Her's is the ſpacious arch, the ſhapely ſpire,
The painter's pencil, and the poet's lyre;
From her the canvaſs borrows light and ſhade,
And verſe, more laſting, hues that never fade.
She guides the finger over the dancing keys,
Gives difficulty all the grace of eaſe,
And pours a torrent of ſweet notes around,
Faſt as the thirſting ear can drink the ſound.
Theſe are the gifts of art, and art thrives moſt
Where commerce has enriched the buſy coaſt;
He catches all improvements in his flight,
Spreads foreign wonders in his country's ſight,
Imports what others have invented well,
And ſtirs his own to match them or excel.

'Tis thus reciprocating, each with each,
Alternately the nations learn and teach;
While providence enjoins to every soul
An union with the vast terraqueous whole.
Heaven speed the canvas, gallantly unfurled
To furnish and accommodate a world,
To give the pole the produce of the sun,
And knit the unsocial climates into one.—
Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave
Impel the fleet whose errand is to save,
To succour wasted regions, and replace
The smile of opulence in sorrow's face.—
Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,
Impede the bark, that plows the deep serene,
Charged with a freight transcending in its worth
The gems of India, nature's rarest birth,
That flies, like Gabriel on his Lord's commands,
An herald of God's love to pagan lands.
But ah! what wish can prosper, or what prayer,
For merchants rich in cargoes of despair,
Who drive a loathsome traffic, gage, and span,
And buy the muscles and the bones of man?
The tender ties of father, husband, friend,
All bonds of nature in that moment end;
And each endures, while yet he draws his breath,
A stroke as fatal as the scythe of death.

The fable warrior, frantic with regret
Of her he loves, and never can forget,
Loſes in tears the far receding ſhore,
But not the thought that they muſt meet no more;
Deprived of her and freedom at a blow,
What has he left that he can yet forego?
Yes, to deep ſadneſs ſullenly reſigned,
He feels his body's bondage in his mind;
Puts off his generous nature; and, to ſuit,
His manners with his fate, puts on the brute.
Oh moſt degrading of all ills, that wait
On man, a mourner in his beſt eſtate!
All other ſorrows virtue may endure,
And find ſubmiſſion more than half a cure;
Grief is itſelf a medicine, and beſtowed
To improve the fortitude that bears the load,
To teach the wanderer, as his woes increaſe,
The path of wiſdom, all whoſe paths are peace;
But ſlavery!—virtue dreads it as her grave:
Patience itſelf is meanneſs in a ſlave;
Or if the will and ſovereignty of God
Bid ſuffer it awhile, and kiſs the rod,
Wait for the dawning of a brighter day,
And ſnap the chain the moment when you may.
Nature imprints upon whatever we ſee,
That has a heart and life in it, Be free;

The beafts are chartered—neither age nor forte
Can quell the love of freedom in a horfe:
He breaks the cord, that held him at the rack;
And, conſcious of an unincumbered back,
Snuffs up the morning air, forgets the rein,
Looſe fly his forelock and his ample mane;
Reſponſive to the diſtant neigh he neighs;
Nor ſtops till, overleaping all delays,
He finds the paſture where his fellows graze.

Canſt thou, and honoured with a Chriſtian name,
Buy what is woman-born, and feel no ſhame;
Trade in the blood of innocence, and plead
Expedience as a warrant for the deed?
So may the wolf, whom famine has made bold
To quit the foreſt and invade the fold:
So may the ruffian, who with ghoſtly glide,
Dagger in hand, ſteals cloſe to your bedſide;
Not he, but his emergence forced the door,
He found it inconvenient to be poor.
Has God then given its ſweetneſs to the cane,
Unleſs his laws be trampled on—in vain?
Built a brave world, which cannot yet ſubſiſt,
Unleſs his right to rule it be diſmiſſed?
Impudent blaſphemy! So folly pleads,
And, avarice being judge, with eaſe ſucceeds.

But grant the plea, and let it ſtand for juſt,
That man make man his prey, becauſe he *muſt*;
Still there is room for pity to abate,
And ſoothe the ſorrows of ſo ſad a ſtate.
A Briton knows, or if he knows it not,
The ſcripture placed within his reach, he ought,
That ſouls have no diſcriminating hue,
Alike important in their Maker's view;
That none are free from blemiſh ſince the fall,
And love divine has paid one price for all.
The wretch, that works and weeps without relief,
Has one that notices his ſilent grief.
He, from whoſe hands alone all power proceeds,
Ranks its abuſe among the fouleſt deeds,
Conſiders *all* injuſtice with a frown;
But *marks* the man that treads his fellow down.
Begone—the whip and bell in that hard hand
Are hateful enſigns of uſurped command.
Not Mexico could purchaſe kings a claim
To ſcourge him, wearineſs his only blame.
Remember heaven has an avenging rod,
To ſmite the poor is treaſon againſt God.

Trouble is grudgingly and hardly brooked,
While life's ſublimeſt joys are overlooked:
We wander over a ſun-burnt thirſty ſoil,
Murmuring and weary of our daily toil,

Forget to enjoy the palm-tree's offered ſhade,
Or taſte the fountain in the neighbouring glade:
Elſe who would loſe, that had the power to improve,
The occaſion of tranſmuting fear to love?
Oh 'tis a godlike privilege to ſave,
And he that ſcorns it is himſelf a ſlave.
Inform his mind; one flaſh of heavenly day
Would heal his heart, and melt his chains away.
"Beauty for aſhes" is a gift indeed,
And ſlaves, by truth enlarged, are doubly freed.
Then would he ſay, ſubmiſſive at thy feet,
While gratitude and love made ſervice ſweet,
My dear deliverer out of hopeleſs night,
Whoſe bounty bought me but to give me light,
I was a bondman on my native plain,
Sin forged, and ignorance made faſt, the chain;
Thy lips have ſhed inſtruction as the dew,
Taught me what path to ſhun and what purſue;
Farewell my former joys! I ſigh no more
For Africa's once loved, benighted ſhore;
Serving a benefactor I am free,
At my beſt home if not exiled from thee.
  Some men make gain a fountain, whence proceeds
A ſtream of liberal and heroic deeds;
The ſwell of pity, not to be confined
Within the ſcanty limits of the mind,

Diſdains the bank, and throws the golden ſands,
A rich depoſit, on the bordering lands:
Theſe have an ear for his paternal call,
Who makes ſome rich for the ſupply of all;
God's gift with pleaſure in his praiſe employ,
And THORNTON is familiar with the joy.

Oh could I worſhip aught beneath the ſkies,
That earth has ſeen, or fancy can deviſe,
Thine altar, ſacred liberty, ſhould ſtand,
Built by no mercenary vulgar hand,
With fragrant turf, and flowers as wild and fair
As ever dreſſed a bank, or ſcented ſummer air.
Duly, as ever on the mountain's height
The peep of morning ſhed a dawning light,
Again, when evening in her ſober veſt
Drew the gray curtain of the fading weſt,
My ſoul ſhould yield thee willing thanks and praiſe,
For the chief bleſſings of my faireſt days:
But that were ſacrilege—praiſe is not thine,
But his who gave thee, and preſerves thee mine:
Elſe I would ſay, and as I ſpake bid fly
A captive bird into the boundleſs ſky,
This triple realm adores thee—thou art come
From Sparta hither, and art here at home.
We feel thy force ſtill active, at this hour
Enjoy immunity from prieſtly power,

While conſcience, happier than in ancient years,
Owns no ſuperior but the God ſhe fears.
Propitious ſpirit! yet expunge a wrong
Thy rights have ſuffered, and our land, too long.
Teach mercy to ten thouſand hearts, that ſhare
The fears and hopes of a commercial care.
Priſons expect the wicked, and were built
To bind the lawleſs, and to puniſh guilt;
But ſhipwreck, earthquake, battle, fire, and flood,
Are mighty miſchiefs, not to be withſtood;
And honeſt merit ſtands on ſlippery ground,
Where covert guile and artifice abound.
Let juſt reſtraint, for public peace deſigned,
Chain up the wolves and tigers of mankind;
The foe of virtue has no claim to thee,
But let inſolvent innocence go free.

Patron of elſe the moſt deſpiſed of men,
Accept the tribute of a ſtranger's pen;
Verſe, like the laurel, its immortal meed,
Should be the guerdon of a noble deed;
I may alarm thee, but I fear the ſhame
(Charity choſen as my theme and aim)
I muſt incur, forgetting HOWARD'S name.
Bleſt with all wealth can give thee, to reſign
Joys doubly ſweet to feelings quick as thine,

To quit the bliſs thy rural ſcenes beſtow,
To ſeek a nobler amidſt ſcenes of woe,
To traverſe ſeas, range kingdoms, and bring home,
Not the proud monuments of Greece or Rome,
But knowledge ſuch as only dungeons teach,
And only ſympathy like thine could reach;
That grief, ſequeſtered from the public ſtage,
Might ſmooth her feathers, and enjoy her cage;
Speaks a divine ambition, and a zeal,
The boldeſt patriot might be proud to feel.
Oh that the voice of clamour and debate,
That pleads for peace till it diſturbs the ſtate,
Were huſhed in favour of thy generous plea,
The poor thy clients, and heaven's ſmile thy fee!
Philoſophy, that does not dream or ſtray,
Walks arm in arm with nature all his way;
Compaſſes earth, dives into it, aſcends
Whatever ſteep inquiry recommends,
Sees planetary wonders ſmoothly roll
Round other ſyſtems under her control,
Drinks wiſdom at the milky ſtream of light,
That cheers the ſilent journey of the night,
And brings at his return a boſom charged
With rich inſtruction, and a ſoul enlarged.
The treaſured ſweets of the capacious plan,
That heaven ſpreads wide before the view of man,

All prompt his pleaſed purſuit, and to purſue
Still prompt him, with a pleaſure always new;
He too has a connecting power, and draws
Man to the centre of the common cauſe,
Aiding a dubious and deficient ſight
With a new medium and a purer light.
All truth is precious, if not all divine;
And what dilates the powers muſt needs refine.
He reads the ſkies, and watching every change,
Provides the faculties an ampler range;
And wins mankind, as his attempts prevail,
A prouder ſtation on the general ſcale.
But reaſon ſtill, unleſs divinely taught,
Whatever ſhe learns, learns nothing as ſhe ought;
The lamp of revelation only ſhows,
What human wiſdom cannot but oppoſe,
That man, in nature's richeſt mantle clad,
And graced with all philoſophy can add,
Though fair without, and luminous within,
Is ſtill the progeny and heir of ſin.
Thus taught, down falls the plumage of his pride;
He feels his need of an unerring guide,
And knows that falling he ſhall riſe no more,
Unleſs the power that bade him ſtand reſtore.
This is indeed philoſophy; this known
Makes wiſdom, worthy of the name, his own;

And without this, whatever he diſcuſs;
Whether the ſpace between the ſtars and us,
Whether he meaſure earth, compute the ſea,
Weigh ſunbeams, carve a fly, or ſpit a flea,
The ſolemn trifler with his boaſted ſkill
Toils much, and is a ſolemn trifler ſtill:
Blind was he born, and his miſguided eyes
Grown dim in trifling ſtudies, blind he dies.
Self-knowledge truly learned of courſe implies
The rich poſſeſſion of a nobler prize;
For ſelf to ſelf, and God to man revealed,
(Two themes to nature's eye for ever ſealed)
Are taught by rays, that fly with equal pace
From the ſame centre of enlightening grace.
Here ſtay thy foot; how copious and how clear,
The overflowing well of Charity ſprings here!
Hark! 'tis the muſic of a thouſand rills,
Some through the groves, ſome down the ſloping hills,
Winding a ſecret or an open courſe,
And all ſupplied from an eternal ſource.
The ties of nature do but feebly bind,
And commerce partially reclaims mankind,
Philoſophy, without his heavenly guide,
May blow up ſelf-conceit, and nouriſh pride;
But, while his promiſe is the reaſoning part,
Has ſtill a veil of midnight on his heart:

'Tis truth divine, exhibited on earth,
Gives Charity her being and her birth.
Suppoſe (when thought is warm and fancy flows,
What will not argument ſometimes ſuppoſe?)
An iſle poſſeſſed by creatures of our kind,
Endued with reaſon, yet by nature blind.
Let ſuppoſition lend her aid once more,
And land ſome grave optician on the ſhore:
He claps his lens, if haply they may ſee,
Cloſe to the part where viſion ought to be;
But finds that though his tubes aſſiſt the ſight,
They cannot give it, or make darkneſs light.
He reads wiſe lectures, and deſcribes aloud
A ſenſe they know not, to the wondering crowd;
He talks of light and the priſmatic hues,
As men of depth in erudition uſe;
But all he gains for his harangue is—Well,———
What monſtrous lies ſome travellers will tell!
The ſoul, whoſe ſight all-quickening grace renews,
Takes the reſemblance of the good ſhe views,
As diamonds, ſtript of their opaque diſguiſe,
Reflect the noon-day glory of the ſkies.
She ſpeaks of him, her author, guardian, friend,
Whoſe love knew no beginning, knows no end,
In language warm as all that love inſpires,
And in the glow of her intenſe deſires,
Pants to communicate her noble fires.

She ſees a world ſtark blind to what employs
Her eager thought, and feeds her flowing joys;
Though wiſdom hail them, heedleſs of her call,
Flies to ſave ſome, and feels a pang for all:
Herſelf as weak as her ſupport is ſtrong,
She feels that frailty ſhe denied ſo long;
And, from a knowledge of her own diſeaſe,
Learns to compaſſionate the ſick ſhe ſees.
Here ſee, acquitted of all vain pretence,
The reign of genuine Charity commence.
Though ſcorn repay her ſympathetic tears,
She ſtill is kind, and ſtill ſhe perſeveres;
The truth ſhe loves a ſightleſs world blaſpheme,
'Tis childiſh dotage, a delirious dream,
The danger they diſcern not, they deny;
Laugh at their only remedy, and die.
But ſtill a ſoul thus touched can never ceaſe,
Whoever threatens war, to ſpeak of peace.
Pure in her aim, and in her temper mild,
Her wiſdom ſeems the weakneſs of a child:
She makes excuſes where ſhe might condemn,
Reviled by thoſe that hate her, prays for them;
Suſpicion lurks not in her artleſs breaſt,
The worſt ſuggeſted, ſhe believes the beſt;
Not ſoon provoked, however ſtung and teaſed,
And, if perhaps made angry, ſoon appeaſed;

She rather waves than will diſpute her right,
And injured makes forgiveneſs her delight.
Such was the portrait an apoſtle drew,
The bright original was one he knew;
Heaven held his hand, the likeneſs muſt be true.
When one, that holds communion with the ſkies,
Has filled his urn where theſe pure waters riſe,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis even as if an angel ſhook his wings;
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
That tells us whence his treaſures are ſupplied.
So when a ſhip well freighted with the ſtores,
The ſun matures on India's ſpicy ſhores,
Has dropped her anchor and her canvaſs furled
In ſome ſafe haven of our weſtern world,
'Twere vain inquiry to what port ſhe went,
The gale informs us, laden with the ſcent.
Some ſeek, when queaſy conſcience has its qualms,
To lull the painful malady with alms;
But charity not feigned intends alone
Another's good—their's centres in their own;
And too ſhort lived to reach the realms of peace,
Muſt ceaſe for ever when the poor ſhall ceaſe.
Flavia, moſt tender of her own good name,
Is rather careleſs of her ſiſter's fame:

Her ſuperfluity the poor ſupplies,
But, if ſhe touch a character, it dies.
The ſeeming virtue weighed againſt the vice,
She deems all ſafe, for ſhe has paid the price:
No charity but alms aught values ſhe,
Except in porcelain on her mantle-tree.
How many deeds, with which the world has rung,
From pride, in league with ignorance, have ſprung!
But God overrules all human follies ſtill,
And bends the tough materials to his will.
A conflagration, or a wintry flood,
Has left ſome hundreds without home or food;
Extravagance and avarice ſhall ſubſcribe,
While fame and ſelf-complacence are the bribe.
The brief proclaimed, it viſits every pew,
But firſt the ſquire's, a compliment but due:
With ſlow deliberation he unties
His glittering purſe, that envy of all eyes,
And, while the clerk juſt puzzles out the pſalm,
Slides guinea behind guinea in his palm;
Till finding, what he might have found before,
A ſmaller piece amidſt the precious ſtore,
Pinched cloſe between his finger and his thumb,
He half exhibits, and then drops the ſum.
Gold to be ſure!—Throughout the town 'tis told
How the good ſquire gives never leſs than gold.

From motives ſuch as his, though not the beſt,
Springs in due time ſupply for the diſtreſſed;
Not leſs effectual than what love beſtows,
Except that office clips it as it goes.
But left I ſeem to ſin againſt a friend,
And wound the grace I mean to recommend,
(Though vice derided with a juſt deſign
Implies no treſpaſs againſt love divine,)
Once more I would adopt the graver ſtyle,
A teacher ſhould be ſparing of his ſmile.
Unleſs a love of virtue light the flame,
Satire is, more than thoſe he brands, to blame;
He hides behind a magiſterial air
His own offences, and ſtrips others bare;
Affects indeed a moſt humane concern,
That men, if gently tutored, will not learn;
That muliſh folly not to be reclaimed
By ſofter methods, muſt be made aſhamed;
But (I might inſtance in St. Patrick's dean)
Too often rails to gratify his ſpleen.
Moſt ſatirifts are indeed a public ſcourge;
Their mildeſt phyſic is a farrier's purge;
Their acrid temper turns as ſoon as ſtirred,
The milk of their good purpoſe all to curd.
Their zeal begotten as their works rehearſe,
By lean deſpair upon an empty purſe,

The wild aſſaſſins ſtart into the ſtreet,
Prepared to poignard whomſoever they meet.
No ſkill in ſwordmanſhip, however juſt,
Can be ſecure againſt a madman's thruſt;
And even virtue ſo unfairly matched,
Although immortal, may be pricked or ſcratched.
When ſcandal has new minted an old lie,
Or taxed invention for a freſh ſupply,
'Tis called a ſatire, and the world appears
Gathering around it with erected ears:
A thouſand names are toſſed into the crowd;
Some whiſpered ſoftly, and ſome twanged aloud;
Juſt as the ſapience of an author's brain
Suggeſts it ſafe or dangerous to be plain.
Strange! how the frequent interjected daſh
Quickens a market, and helps off the traſh;
The important letters, that include the reſt,
Serve as a key to thoſe that are ſuppreſſed;
Conjecture gripes the victims in his paw,
The world is charmed, and Scrib eſcapes the law.
So, when the cold damp ſhades of night prevail,
Worms may be caught by either head or tail;
Forcibly drawn from many a cloſe receſs,
They meet with little pity, no redreſs;
Plunged in the ſtream they lodge upon the mud,
Food for the famiſhed rovers of the flood.

All zeal for a reform, that gives offence
To peace and charity, is mere pretence:
A bold remark, but which, if well applied,
Would humble many a towering poet's pride.
Perhaps the man was in a ſportive fit,
And had no other play-place for his wit;
Perhaps enchanted with the love of fame,
He ſought the jewel in his neighbour's ſhame;
Perhaps—whatever end he might purſue,
The cauſe of virtue could not be his view.
At every ſtroke wit flaſhes in our eyes;
The turns are quick, the poliſhed points ſurpriſe,
But ſhine with cruel and tremendous charms,
That while they pleaſe poſſeſs us with alarms;
So have I ſeen, (and haſtened to the ſight
On all the wings of holiday delight)
Where ſtands that monument of ancient power,
Named with emphatic dignity, the tower,
Guns, halberts, ſwords, and piſtols, great and ſmall,
In ſtarry forms diſpoſed upon the wall;
We wonder, as we gazing ſtand below,
That braſs and ſteel ſhould make ſo fine a ſhow;
But though we praiſe the exact deſigner's ſkill,
Account them implements of miſchief ſtill.
No works ſhall find acceptance in that day,
When all diſguiſes ſhall be rent away,

That ſquare not truly with the ſcripture plan,
Nor ſpring from love to God, or love to man.
As he ordains things ſordid in their birth
To be reſolved into their parent earth;
And, though the ſoul ſhall ſeek ſuperior orbs,
Whatever this world produces, it abſorbs;
So ſelf ſtarts nothing, but what tends apace
Home to the goal, where it began the race.
Such as our motive is our aim muſt be,
If this be ſervile, that can never be free:
If ſelf employ us, whatſoever is wrought,
We glorify that ſelf, not him we ought;
Such virtues had need prove their own reward,
The judge of all men owes them no regard.
True Charity, a plant divingly nurſed,
Fed by the love, from which it roſe at firſt,
Thrives againſt hope, and in the rudeſt ſcene,
Storms but enliven its unfading green;
Exuberant is the ſhadow it ſupplies,
Its fruit on earth, its growth above the ſkies.
To look at him, who formed us and redeemed,
So glorious now, though once ſo diſeſteemed,
To ſee a God ſtretch forth his human hand,
To uphold the boundleſs ſcenes of his command,
To recollect that in a form like our's,
He bruiſed beneath his feet the infernal powers,

Captivity led captive, roſe to claim
The wreath he won, ſo dearly in our name;
That throned above all height he condeſcends
To call the few that truſt in him his friends;
That in the heaven of heavens, that ſpace he deems
Too ſcanty for the exertion of his beams,
And ſhines, as if impatient to beſtow
Life and a kingdom upon worms below;
That ſight imparts a never-dying flame,
Though feeble in degree, in kind the ſame.
Like him the ſoul thus kindled from above
Spreads wide her arms of univerſal love;
And ſtill enlarged as ſhe receives the grace,
Includes creation in her cloſe embrace.
Behold a Chriſtian!—and without the fires
The founder of that name alone inſpires,
Though all accompliſhment, all knowledge meet,
To make the ſhining prodigy complete,
Whoever boaſts that name—behold a cheat!
Were love, in theſe the world's laſt doting years,
As frequent as the want of it appears,
The churches warmed, they would no longer hold
Such frozen figures, ſtiff as they are cold;
Relenting forms would loſe their power, or ceaſe;
And even the dipt and ſprinkled live in peace:
Each heart would quit its priſon in the breaſt,
And flow in free communion with the reſt.

The ſtateſman, ſkilled in projects dark and deep,
Might burn his uſeleſs Machiavel, and ſleep;
His budget often filled, yet always poor,
Might ſwing at eaſe behind his ſtudy door,
No longer prey upon our annual rents,
Or ſcare the nation with its big contents:
Diſbanded legions freely might depart,
And ſlaying man would ceaſe to be an art.
No learned diſputants would take the field,
Sure not to conquer, and ſure not to yield;
Both ſides deceived, if rightly underſtood,
Pelting each other for the public good.
Did charity prevail, the preſs would prove
A vehicle of virtue, truth, and love;
And I might ſpare myſelf the pains to ſhow
What few can learn, and all ſuppoſe they know.
Thus have I ſought to grace a ſerious lay
With many a wild indeed but flowery ſpray,
In hopes to gain, what elſe I muſt have loſt,
The attention pleaſure has ſo much engroſſed.
But if unhappily deceived I dream,
And prove too weak for ſo divine a theme,
Let Charity forgive me a miſtake
That zeal, not vanity, has chanced to make,
And ſpare the poet for his ſubject's ſake.

CONVERSATION.

Nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus austri,
Nec percussa juvant fluctû tam litora, nec quæ
Saxosas inter decurrunt flumina valles.

VIRG. Ecl. 5.

THOUGH nature weigh our talents, and dispense
To every man his modicum of sense,
And Conversation in its better part
May be esteemed a gift and not an art,
Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,
On culture, and the sowing of the soil.
Words learned by rote a parrot may rehearse,
But talking is not always to converse;
Not more distinct from harmony divine,
The constant creaking of a country sign.
As Alphabets in ivory employ,
Hour after hour, the yet unlettered boy,
Sorting and puzzling with a deal of glee
Those seeds of science called his A B C;

So language in the mouths of the adult,
Witneſs its inſignificant reſult,
Too often proves an implement of play,
A toy to ſport with and paſs time away.
Collect at evening what the day brought forth,
Compreſs the ſun into its ſolid worth,
And if it weigh the importance of a fly,
The ſcales are falſe, or Algebra a lie.
Sacred interpreter of human thought,
How few reſpect or uſe thee as they ought!
But all ſhall give account of every wrong,
Who dare diſhonour or defile the tongue;
Who proſtitute it in the cauſe of vice,
Or ſell their glory at a market-price;
Who vote for hire, or point it with lampoon,
The dear-bought placeman, and the cheap buffoon.
There is a prurience in the ſpeech of ſome,
Wrath ſtays him, or elſe God would ſtrike them dumb:
His wiſe forbearance has their end in view,
They fill their meaſure, and receive their due.
The heathen law-givers of ancient days,
Names almoſt worthy of a Chriſtian's praiſe,
Would drive them forth from the reſort of men,
And ſhut up every ſatyr in his den.
Oh come not ye near innocence and truth,
Ye worms that eat into the bud of youth!

Infectious as impure, your blighting power
Taints in its rudiments the promised flower;
Its odour perished and its charming hue,
Thenceforth 'tis hateful, for it smells of you.
Not even the vigorous and headlong rage
Of adolescence, or a firmer age,
Affords a plea allowable or just
For making speech the pamperer of lust;
But when the breath of age commits the fault,
'Tis nauseous as the vapour of a vault.
So withered stumps disgrace the sylvan scene,
No longer fruitful, and no longer green;
The sapless wood divested of the bark,
Grows fungous, and takes fire at every spark.
Oaths terminate, as Paul observes, all strife—
Some men have surely then a peaceful life;
Whatever subject occupy discourse,
The feats of Vestris, or the naval force,
Asseveration blustering in your face
Makes contradiction such an hopeless case:
In every tale they tell, or false or true,
Well known, or such as no man ever knew,
They fix attention, heedless of your pain,
With oaths like rivets forced into the brain;
And even when sober truth prevails throughout,
They swear it, till affirmance breeds a doubt,

A Perſian, humble ſervant of the ſun,
Who though devout yet bigotry had none,
Hearing a lawyer, grave in his addreſs,
With adjurations every word impreſs,
Suppoſed the man a biſhop, or at leaſt,
God's name ſo much upon his lips, a prieſt;
Bowed at the cloſe with all his graceful airs,
And begged an intereſt in his frequent prayers.
Go, quit the rank to which ye ſtood preferred,
Henceforth aſſociate in one common herd;
Religion, virtue, reaſon, common ſenſe,
Pronounce your human form a falſe pretence;
A mere diſguiſe, in which a devil lurks,
Who yet betrays his ſecret by his works.
Ye powers who rule the tongue, if ſuch there are,
And make colloquial happineſs your care,
Preſerve me from the thing I dread and hate,
A duel in the form of a debate.
The claſh of arguments and jar of words,
Worſe than the mortal brunt of rival ſwords,
Decide no queſtion with their tedious length,
For oppoſition gives opinion ſtrength,
Divert the champions prodigal of breath,
And put the peaceably-diſpoſed to death.
Oh thwart me not, ſir Soph, at every turn,
Nor carp at every flaw you may diſcern;

Though ſyllogiſms hang not on my tongue,
I am not ſurely always in the wrong;
'Tis hard if all is falſe that I advance,
A fool muſt now and then be right by chance.
Not that all freedom of diſſent I blame;
No—there I grant the privilege I claim.
A diſputable point is no man's ground;
Rove where you pleaſe, 'tis common all around.
Diſcourſe may want an animated—No,
To bruſh the ſurface and to make it flow;
But ſtill remember, if you mean to pleaſe,
To preſs your point with modeſty and eaſe.
The mark, at which my juſter aim I take,
Is contradiction for its own dear ſake.
Set your opinion at whatever pitch,
Knots and impediments make ſomething hitch;
Adopt his own, 'tis equally in vain,
Your thread of argument is ſnapt again;
The wrangler, rather than accord with you,
Will judge himſelf deceived, and prove it too.
Vociferated logic kills me quite,
A noiſy man is always in the right,
I twirl my thumbs, fall back into my chair,
Fix on the wainſcot a diſtreſsful ſtare,
And, when I hope his blunders are all out,
Reply diſcreetly—To be ſure—no doubt!

Dubius is ſuch a ſcrupulous good man—
Yes—you may catch him tripping if you can.
He would not, with a peremptory tone,
Aſſert the noſe upon his face his own;
With heſitation admirably ſlow,
He humbly hopes—preſumes—it may be ſo.
His evidence, if he were called by law
To ſwear to ſome enormity he ſaw,
For want of prominence and juſt relief,
Would hang an honeſt man and ſave a thief.
Through conſtant dread of giving truth offence,
He ties up all his hearers in ſuſpenſe;
Knows what he knows as if he knew it not,
What he remembers ſeems to have forgot;
His ſole opinion, whatſoever befall,
Centering at laſt in having none at all.
Yet, though he teaſe and baulk your liſtening ear,
He makes one uſeful point exceeding clear;
However ingenious on his darling theme
A ſceptic in philoſophy may ſeem,
Reduced to practice, his beloved rule
Would only prove him a conſummate fool;
Uſeleſs in him alike both brain and ſpeech,
Fate having placed all truth above his reach,
His ambiguities his total ſum,
He might as well be blind, and deaf, and dumb.

Where men of judgment creep and feel their way,
The poſitive pronounce without diſmay;
Their want of light and intellect ſupplied
By ſparks, abſurdity ſtrikes out of pride
Without the means of knowing right from wrong,
They always are deciſive, clear and ſtrong;
Where others toil with philoſophic force,
Their nimble nonſenſe takes a ſhorter courſe;
Flings at your head conviction in the lump,
And gains remote concluſions at a jump:
Their own defect, inviſible to them,
Seen in another, they at once condemn;
And, though ſelf-idolized in every caſe,
Hate their own likeneſs in a brother's face.
The cauſe is plain, and not to be denied,
The proud are always moſt provoked by pride;
Few competitions but engender ſpite;
And thoſe the moſt, where neither has a right.
The point of honour has been deemed of uſe,
To teach good manners, and to curb abuſe;
Admit it true, the conſequence is clear,
Our poliſhed manners are a maſk we wear,
And at the bottom barbarous ſtill and rude,
We are reſtrained indeed, but not ſubdued.
The very remedy, however ſure,
Springs from the miſchief it intends to cure,

And ſavage in its principle appears,
Tried, as it ſhould be, by the fruit it bears.
'Tis hard indeed if nothing will defend
Mankind from quarrels but their fatal end;
That now and then an hero muſt deceaſe,
That the ſurviving world may live in peace.
Perhaps at laſt cloſe ſcrutiny may ſhow
The practice daſtardly, and mean, and low
That men engage in it compelled by force,
And fear, not courage, is its proper ſource.
The fear of tyrant cuſtom, and the fear
Leſt fops ſhould cenſure us, and fools ſhould ſneer.
At leaſt to trample on our Maker's laws,
And hazard life for any or no cauſe,
To ruſh into a fixt eternal ſtate
Out of the very flames of rage and hate,
Or ſend another ſhivering to the bar
With all the guilt of ſuch unnatural war,
Whatever uſe may urge, or honour plead,
On reaſon's verdict is a madman's deed.
Am I to ſet my life upon a throw,
Becauſe a bear is rude and ſurly? No—
A moral, ſenſible, and well-bred man
Will not affront me, and no other can.
Were I empowered to regulate the liſts,
They ſhould encounter with well-loaded fiſts;

A Trojan combat would be ſomething new,
Let DARES beat ENTELLUS black and blue;
Then each might ſhow, to his admiring friends,
In honourable bumps his rich amends,
And carry, in contuſions of his ſkull,
A ſatisfactory receipt in full.

A ſtory, in which native humour reigns,
Is often uſeful, always entertains:
A graver fact, enlifted on your ſide,
May furniſh illuſtration, well applied;
But ſedentary weavers of long tales
Give me the fidgets, and my patience fails.
'Tis the moſt aſinine employ on earth,
To hear them tell of parentage and birth,
And echo converſations, dull and dry,
Embelliſhed with—*He ſaid*, and *So ſaid I*;
At every interview their route the ſame,
The repetition makes attention lame:
We buſtle up with unſucceſsful ſpeed,
And in the ſaddeſt part cry—*Droll indeed!*
The path of narrative with care purſue,
Still making probability your clue;
On all the veſtiges of truth attend,
And let *them* guide you to a decent end.
Of all ambitions man may entertain,
The worſt, that can invade a fickly brain,

Is that, which angles hourly for ſurpriſe,
And baits its hook with prodigies and lies.
Credulous infancy, or age as weak,
Are fitteſt auditors for ſuch to ſeek,
Who to pleaſe others will themſelves diſgrace,
Yet pleaſe not, but affront you to your face.
A great retailer of this curious ware
Having unloaded and made many ſtare,
Can this be true?—an arch obſerver cries,
Yes, (rather moved) I ſaw it with theſe eyes;
Sir! I believe it on that ground alone;
I could not, had I ſeen it with my own.
A tale ſhould be judicious, clear, ſuccinct;
The language plain, and incidents well linked;
Tell not as new what every body knows,
And, new or old, ſtill haſten to a cloſe;
There, centering in a focus round and neat,
Let all your rays of information meet.
What neither yields us profit nor delight
Is like a nurſe's lullaby at night;
Guy Earl of Warwick and fair Eleanore,
Or giant-killing Jack, would pleaſe me more.
The pipe, with ſolemn interpoſing puff,
Makes half a ſentence at a time enough;
The dozing ſages drop the drowſy ſtrain,
Then pauſe, and puff—and ſpeak, and pauſe again.

Such often, like the tube they ſo admire,
Important triflers! have more ſmoke than fire.
Pernicious weed! whoſe ſcent the fair annoys,
Unfriendly to ſociety's chief joys,
Thy worſt effect is baniſhing for hours
The ſex, whoſe preſence civilizes our's:
Thou art indeed the drug a gardener wants,
To poiſon vermin that infeſt his plants;
But are we ſo to wit and beauty blind,
As to deſpiſe the glory of our kind,
And ſhow the ſofteſt minds and faireſt forms
As little mercy, as he grubs and worms?
They dare not wait the riotous abuſe,
Thy thirſt-creating ſteams at length produce,
When wine has given indecent language birth,
And forced the flood-gates of licentious mirth;
For ſea-born Venus her attachment ſhows
Still to that element, from which ſhe roſe,
And with a quiet, which no fumes diſturb,
Sips meek infuſions of a milder herb.
The emphatic ſpeaker dearly loves to oppoſe,
In contact inconvenient, noſe to noſe.
As if the gnomon on his neighbour's phiz,
Touched with the magnet had attracted his.
His whiſpered theme, dilated and at large,
Proves after all a wind-gun's airy charge,

An extract of his diary—no more,
A tasteless journal of the day before.
He walked abroad, overtaken in the rain
Called on a friend, drank tea, slept home again,
Resumed his purpose, had a world of talk
With one he stumbled on, and lost his walk.
I interrupt him with a sudden bow,
Adieu, dear Sir! lest you should lose it now.
I cannot talk with civet in the room,
A fine puss-gentleman that's all perfume;
The sight's enough—no need to smell a beau—
Who thrusts his nose into a raree-show?
His odoriferous attempts to please
Perhaps might prosper with a swarm of bees;
But we that make no honey, though we sting,
Poets, are sometimes apt to maul the thing.
'Tis wrong to bring into a mixt resort,
What makes some sick, and others *a-la-mort*;
An argument of cogence, we may say,
Why such an one should keep himself away.
A graver coxcomb we may sometimes see,
Quite as absurd, though not so light as he:
A shallow brain behind a serious mask,
An oracle within an empty cask,
The solemn sop; significant and budge;
A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge;

He ſays but little, and that little ſaid
Owes all its weight, like loaded dice, to lead.
His wit invites you by his looks to come,
But when you knock it never is at home:
'Tis like a parcel ſent you by the ſtage,
Some handſome preſent, as your hopes preſage;
'Tis heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove
An abſent friend's fidelity and love,
But when unpacked your diſappointment groans
To find it ſtuffed with brickbats, earth, and ſtones.
Some men employ their health, an ugly trick,
In making known how oft they have been ſick,
And give us in recitals of diſeaſe
A doctor's trouble, but without the fees;
Relate how many weeks they kept their bed,
How an emetic or cathartic ſped;
Nothing is ſlightly touched, much leſs forgot,
Noſe, ears, and eyes, ſeem preſent on the ſpot.
Now the diſtemper, ſpite of draught or pill,
Victorious ſeemed, and now the doctor's ſkill;
And now—alas for unforeſeen miſhaps!
They put on a damp night-cap and relapſe;
They thought they muſt have died they were ſo bad;
Their peeviſh hearers almoſt wiſh they had.
Some fretful tempers wince at every touch,
You always do too little or too much:

You ſpeak with life, in hopes to entertain,
Your elevated voice goes through the brain;
You fall at once into a lower key,
That's worſe—the drone-pipe of an humble bee.
The ſouthern ſaſh admits too ſtrong a light,
You riſe and drop the curtain—now it's night.
He ſhakes with cold—you ſtir the fire and ſtrive
To make a blaze—that's roaſting him alive.
Serve him with veniſon and he chooſes fiſh;
With ſoal—that's juſt the ſort he would not wiſh.
He takes what he at firſt profeſſed to loath,
And in due time feeds heartily on both;
Yet ſtill, overclouded with a conſtant frown,
He does not ſwallow, but he gulps it down.
Your hope to pleaſe him vain on every plan,
Himſelf ſhould work that wonder, if he can—
Alas! his efforts double his diſtreſs,
He likes your's little, and his own ſtill leſs.
Thus always teaſing others, always teaſed,
His only pleaſure is—to be diſpleaſed.

I pity baſhful men, who feel the pain
Of fancied ſcorn and undeſerved diſdain,
And bear the marks upon a bluſhing face
Of needleſs ſhame and ſelf-impoſed diſgrace.
Our ſenſibilities are ſo acute,
The fear of being ſilent makes us mute.

We ſometimes think we could a ſpeech produce
Much to the purpoſe, if our tongues were looſe;
But being tried, it dies upon the lip,
Faint as a chicken's note that has the pip:
Our waſted oil unprofitably burns,
Like hidden lamps in old ſepulchral urns.
Few Frenchmen of this evil have complained;
It ſeems as if we Britons were ordained,
By way of wholeſome curb upon our pride,
To fear each other, fearing none beſide.
The cauſe perhaps inquiry may deſcry,
Self ſearching with an introverted eye,
Concealed within an unſuſpected part,
The vaineſt corner of our own vain heart:
For ever aiming at the world's eſteem,
Our ſelf-importance ruins its own ſcheme;
In other eyes our talents rarely ſhown,
Become at length ſo ſplendid in our own,
We dare not riſque them into public view,
Left they miſcarry of what ſeems their due.
True modeſty is a diſcerning grace,
And only bluſhes in the proper place;
But counterfeit is blind and ſkulks through fear,
Where 'tis a ſhame to be aſhamed to appear:
Humility the parent of the firſt,
The laſt by vanity produced and nurſt.

The circle formed, we ſit in ſilent ſtate,
Like figures drawn upon a dial-plate;
Yes ma'am, and no ma'am, uttered ſoftly, ſhow
Every five minutes how the minutes go;
Each individual ſuffering a conſtraint
Poetry may, but colours cannot paint;
As if in cloſe committee on the ſky,
Reports it hot or cold, or wet or dry;
And finds a changing clime an happy ſource
Of wiſe reflection, and well-timed diſcourſe.
We next enquire, but ſoftly and by ſtealth,
Like conſervators of the public health,
Of epidemic throats, if ſuch there are,
And coughs, and rheums, and phthiſic, and catarrh.
That theme exhauſted, a wide chaſm enſues,
Filled up at laſt with intereſting news,
Who danced with whom, and who are like to wed,
And who is hanged, and who is brought to bed:
But fear to call a more important cauſe,
As if it were treaſon againſt Engliſh laws.
The viſit paid, with ecſtacy we come,
As from a ſeven years tranſportation, home,
And there reſume an unembarraſſed brow,
Recovering what we loſt we know not how,
The faculties, that ſeemed reduced to nought,
Expreſſion and the privilege of thought.

The reeking, roaring hero of the chaſe,
I give him over as a deſperate caſe.
Phyſicians write in hopes to work a cure,
Never, if honeſt ones, when death is ſure;
And though the fox he follows may be tamed,
A mere fox-follower never is reclaimed.
Some farrier ſhould preſcribe his proper courſe,
Whoſe only fit companion is his horſe,
Or if, deſerving of a better doom,
The noble beaſt judge otherwiſe, his groom.
Yet even the rogue that ſerves him, though he ſtand
To take his honour's orders, cap in hand,
Prefers his fellow-grooms with much good ſenſe,
Their ſkill a truth, his maſter's a pretence.
If neither horſe nor groom affect the ſquire,
Where can at laſt his jockeyſhip retire?
Oh to the club, the ſcene of ſavage joys,
The ſchool of coarſe good fellowſhip and noiſe;
There, in the ſweet ſociety of thoſe,
Whoſe friendſhip from his boyiſh years he choſe,
Let him improve his talent if he can,
Till none but beaſts acknowledge him a man.

Man's heart had been impenetrably ſealed
Like their's, that cleave the flood or graze the field,
Had not his Maker's all-beſtowing hand
Given him a ſoul, and bade him underſtand;

The reaſoning power vouchſafed of courſe inferred
The power to clothe that reaſon with his word;
For all is perfect that God works on earth,
And he that gives conception, aids the birth.
If this be plain, 'tis plainly underſtood,
What uſes of his boon the giver would.
The mind, diſpatched upon her buſy toil,
Should range where Providence has bleſt the ſoil;
Viſiting every flower with labour meet,
And gathering all her treaſures ſweet by ſweet,
She ſhould embue the tongue with what ſhe ſips,
And ſhed the balmy bleſſing on the lips,
That good diffuſed may more abundant grow,
And ſpeech may praiſe the power that bids it flow.
Will the ſweet warbler of the live-long night,
That fills the liſtening lover with delight,
Forget his harmony, with rapture heard,
To learn the twittering of a meaner bird,
Or make the parrot's mimicry his choice,
That odious libel on a human voice?
No—nature unſophiſticate by man,
Starts not aſide from her Creator's plan;
The melody, that was at firſt deſigned
To cheer the rude forefathers of mankind,
Is note for note delivered in our ears,
In the laſt ſcene of her ſix thouſand years

Yet faſhion, leader of a chattering train,
Whom man for his own hurt permits to reign,
Who ſhifts and changes all things but his ſhape,
And would degrade her votary to an ape,
The fruitful parent of abuſe and wrong,
Holds an uſurped dominion over his tongue;
There fits and prompts him with his own diſgrace,
Preſcribes the theme, the tone, and the grimace,
And when accompliſhed in her wayward ſchool,
Calls gentleman whom ſhe has made a fool.
'Tis an unalterable fixed decree
That none could frame or ratify but ſhe,
That heaven and hell, and righteouſneſs and ſin,
Snares in his path and foes that lurk within,
God and his attributes (a field of day
Where 'tis an angel's happineſs to ſtray),
Fruits of his love and wonders of his might,
Be never named in ears eſteemed polite.
That he who dares, when ſhe forbids, be grave,
Shall ſtand proſcribed, a madman or a knave,
A cloſe deſigner not to be believed,
Or, if excuſed that charge, at leaſt deceived.
Oh folly worthy of the nurſe's lap,
Give it the breaſt, or ſtop its mouth with pap!
Is it incredible, or can it ſeem
A dream to any, except thoſe that dream,

That man ſhould love his Maker, and *that* fire,
Warming his heart, ſhould at his lips tranſpire?
Know then, and modeſtly let fall your eyes,
And veil your daring creſt that braves the ſkies;
That air of inſolence affronts your God,
You need his pardon, and provoke his rod;
Now, in a poſture that becomes you more
Than that heroic ſtrut aſſumed before,
Know, your arrears with every hour accrue
For mercy ſhown, while wrath is juſtly due.
The time is ſhort, and there are ſouls on earth,
Though future pain may ſerve for preſent mirth,
Acquainted with the woes that fear or ſhame,
By faſhion taught, forbade them once to name,
And, having felt the pangs you deem a jeſt,
Have proved them truths too big to be expreſſed.
Go ſeek on revelation's hallowed ground,
Sure to ſucceed, the remedy they found;
Touched by that power that you have dared to mock,
That makes ſeas ſtable, and diſſolves the rock,
Your heart ſhall yield a life-renewing ſtream,
That fools, as you have done, ſhall call a dream.

It happened on a ſolemn even-tide,
Soon after He that was our Surety died,
Two boſom friends, each penſively inclined,
The ſcene of all thoſe ſorrows left behind,

Sought their own village, buſied as they went
In muſings worthy of the great event:
They ſpake of him they loved, of him whoſe life,
Though blameleſs, had incurred perpetual ſtrife,
Whoſe deeds had left, in ſpite of hoſtile arts,
A deep memorial graven on their hearts.
The recollection, like a vein of ore,
The farther traced, enriched them ſtill the more;
They thought him, and they juſtly thought him, one
Sent to do more than he appeared to have done;
To exalt a people, and to place them high
Above all elſe, and wondered he ſhould die.
Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A ſtranger joined them, courteous as a friend,
And aſked them with a kind engaging air
What their affliction was, and begged a ſhare.
Informed, he gathered up the broken thread,
And, truth and wiſdom gracing all he ſaid,
Explained, illuſtrated, and ſearched ſo well
The tender theme, on which they choſe to dwell,
That reaching home, the night, they ſaid, is near,
We muſt not now be parted, ſojourn here—
The new acquaintance ſoon became a gueſt,
And made ſo welcome at their ſimple feaſt,
He bleſſed the bread, but vaniſhed at the word,
And left them both exclaiming, 'Twas the Lord!

Did not our hearts feel all he deigned to say,
Did they not burn within us by the way?
Now their's was converſe, ſuch as it behoves
Man to maintain, and ſuch as God approves:
Their views indeed were indiſtinct and dim,
But yet ſucceſsful, being aimed at him.
Chriſt and his character their only ſcope,
Their object, and their ſubject, and their hope,
They felt what it became them much to feel,
And, wanting him to looſe the ſacred ſeal,
Found him as prompt, as their deſire was true,
To ſpread the new-born glories in their view.
Well—what are ages and the lapſe of time
Matched againſt truths, as laſting as ſublime?
Can length of years on God himſelf exact,
Or make that fiction which was once a fact?
No—marble and recording braſs decay,
And like the graver's memory paſs away;
The works of man inherit, as is juſt,
Their author's frailty, and return to duſt:
But truth divine for ever ſtands ſecure,
Its head is guarded as its baſe is ſure;
Fixed in the rolling flood of endleſs years,
The pillar of the eternal plan appears,
The raving ſtorm and daſhing wave defies,
Built by that architect, who built the ſkies.

Hearts may be found, that harbour at this hour
That love of Chriſt, and all its quickening power;
And lips unſtained by folly or by ſtrife,
Whoſe wiſdom, drawn from the deep well of life,
Taſtes of its healthful origin, and flows
A Jordan for the ablution of our woes.
Oh days of heaven, and nights of equal praiſe,
Serene and peaceful as thoſe heavenly days,
When ſouls drawn upwards, in communion ſweet,
Enjoy the ſtillneſs of ſome cloſe retreat,
Diſcourſe, as if releaſed and ſafe at home,
Of dangers paſt and wonders yet to come,
And ſpread the ſacred treaſures of the breaſt
Upon the lap of covenanted reſt.

What, always dreaming over heavenly things,
Like angel heads in ſtone with pigeon-wings?
Canting and whining out all day the word,
And half the night? fanatic and abſurd!
Mine be the friend leſs frequent in his prayers,
Who makes no buſtle with his ſoul's affairs,
Whoſe wit can brighten up a wintry day,
And chaſe the ſplenetic dull hours away;
Content on earth in earthly things to ſhine,
Who waits for heaven ere he becomes divine,
Leaves ſaints to enjoy thoſe altitudes they teach,
And plucks the fruit placed more within his reach.

Well ſpoken, Advocate of ſin and ſhame,
Known by thy bleating, Ignorance thy name.
Is ſparkling wit the world's excluſive right,
The fixt fee-ſimple of the vain and light?
Can hopes of heaven, bright proſpects of an hour,
That come to waft us out of ſorrow's power,
Obſcure or quench a faculty, that finds
Its happieſt ſoil in the ſereneſt minds?
Religion curbs indeed its wanton play,
And brings the trifler under rigorous ſway,
But gives it uſefulneſs unknown before,
And, purifying, makes it ſhine the more.
A Chriſtian's wit is inoffenſive light,
A beam that aids, but never grieves the ſight;
Vigorous in age as in the fluſh of youth,
'Tis always active on the ſide of truth;
Temperance and peace inſure its healthful ſtate,
And make its brighteſt at its lateſt date.
Oh I have ſeen (nor hope perhaps in vain,
Ere life go down, to ſee ſuch ſights again)
A veteran warrior in the Chriſtian field,
Who never ſaw the ſword he could not wield;
Grave without dulneſs, learned without pride,
Exact, yet not preciſe, though meek, keen-eyed;
A man that would have foiled at their own play
A dozen would-be's of the modern day;

Who, when occaſion juſtified its uſe,
Had wit as bright as ready to produce,
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from philoſophy's enlightened page,
His rich materials, and regale your ear
With ſtrains it was a privilege to hear:
Yet above all his luxury ſupreme,
And his chief glory, was the goſpel theme;
There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence ſeemed there at home,
Ambitious not to ſhine or to excel,
But to treat juſtly what he loved ſo well.
It moves me more perhaps than folly ought,
When ſome green heads, as void of wit as thought,
Suppoſe *themſelves* monopolifts of ſenſe,
And wiſer men's ability pretence.
Though time will wear us, and we muſt grow old,
Such men are not forgot as ſoon as cold,
Their fragrant memory will out-laſt their tomb,
Embalmed for ever in its own perfume.
And to ſay truth, though in its early prime,
And when unſtained with any groſſer crime,
Youth has a ſprightlineſs and fire to boaſt,
That in the valley of decline are loſt,
And virtue with peculiar charms appears,
Crowned with the garland of life's blooming years;

Yet age, by long experience well informed,
Well read, well tempered, with religion warmed,
That fire abated, which impels raſh youth,
Proud of his ſpeed to overſhoot the truth,
As time improves the grape's authentic juice,
Mellows and makes the ſpeech more fit for uſe,
And claims a reverence in its ſhortening day,
That 'tis an honour and a joy to pay.
The fruits of age, leſs fair, are yet more ſound,
Than thoſe a brighter ſeaſon pours around;
And, like the ſtores autumnal ſuns mature,
Through wintry rigours unimpaired endure.
What is fanatic frenzy, ſcorned ſo much,
And dreaded more than a contagious touch?
I grant it dangerous, and approve your fear,
That fire is catching if you draw too near;
But ſage obſervers oft miſtake the flame,
And give true piety that odious name.
To tremble (as the creature of an hour
Ought at the view of an almighty power)
Before his preſence, at whoſe awful throne
All tremble in all worlds, except our own,
To ſupplicate his mercy, love his ways,
And prize them above pleaſure, wealth, or praiſe,
Though common ſenſe allowed a caſting voice,
And free from bias, muſt approve the choice,

Convicts a man fanatic in the extreme,
And wild as madness in the world's esteem.
But that disease, when soberly defined,
Is the false fire of an overheated mind;
It views the truth with a distorted eye,
And either warps or lays it useless by;
'Tis narrow, selfish, arrogant, and draws
Its sordid nourishment from man's applause;
And while at heart sin unrelinquished lies,
Presumes itself chief favourite of the skies.
'Tis such a light as putrefaction breeds
In fly-blown flesh, whereon the maggot feeds,
Shines in the dark, but ushered into day
The stench remains, the lustre dies away.
True bliss, if man may reach it, is composed
Of hearts in union mutually disclosed;
And, farewell else all hope of pure delight,
Those hearts should be reclaimed, renewed, upright.
Bad men, profaning friendship's hallowed name,
Form, in its stead, a covenant of shame,
A dark confederacy against the laws
Of virtue, and religion's glorious cause:
They build each other up with dreadful skill,
As bastions set point blank against God's will;
Enlarge and fortify the dread redoubt,
Deeply resolved to shut a Saviour out;

Call legions up from hell to back the deed;
And, curſt with conqueſt, finally ſucceed.
But ſouls, that carry on a bleſt exchange
Of joys, they meet with in their heavenly range,
And with a fearleſs confidence make known
The ſorrows, ſympathy eſteems its own,
Daily derive increaſing light and force
From ſuch communion in their pleaſant courſe,
Feel leſs the journey's roughneſs and its length,
Meet their opppoſers with united ſtrength,
And, one in heart, in intereſt, and deſign,
Gird up each other to the race divine.

But Converſation, chooſe what theme we may,
And chiefly when religion leads the way,
Should flow, like waters after ſummer ſhowers,
Not as if raiſed by mere mechanic powers.
The Chriſtian, in whoſe ſoul, though now diſtreſſed,
Lives the dear thought of joys he once poſſeſſed,
When all his glowing language iſſued forth
With God's deep ſtamp upon its current worth,
Will ſpeak without diſguiſe, and muſt impart,
Sad as it is, his undiſſembling heart,
Abhors conſtraint, and dares not feign a zeal,
Or ſeem to boaſt a fire he does not feel.
The ſong of Sion is a taſteleſs thing,
Unleſs, when riſing on a joyful wing,

The ſoul can mix with the celeſtial bands,
And give the ſtrain the compaſs it demands.
Strange tidings theſe to tell a world, who treat
All but their own experience as deceit!
Will they believe, though credulous enough
To ſwallow much upon much weaker proof,
That there are bleſt inhabitants of earth,
Partakers of a new ethereal birth,
Their hopes, deſires, and purpoſes eſtranged
From things terreſtrial, and divinely changed,
Their very language of a kind, that ſpeaks
The ſoul's ſure intereſt in the good ſhe ſeeks,
Who deal with ſcripture, its importance felt,
As Tully with philoſophy once dealt,
And in the ſilent watches of the night,
And through the ſcenes of toil-renewing light,
The ſocial walk, or ſolitary ride,
Keep ſtill the dear companion at their ſide?
No—ſhame upon a ſelf-diſgracing age,
God's work may ſerve an ape upon a ſtage
With ſuch a jeſt, as filled with helliſh glee
Certain inviſibles as ſhrewd as he;
But veneration or reſpect finds none,
Save from the ſubjects of that work alone.
The world grown old her deep diſcernment ſhows,
Claps ſpectacles on her ſagacious noſe,

Peruſes cloſely the true Chriſtian's face,
And finds it a mere maſk of ſly grimace,
Uſurps God's office, lays his boſom bare,
And finds hypocriſy cloſe lurking there,
And ſerving God herſelf through mere conſtraint
Concludes his unfeigned love of him, a feint.
And yet, God knows, look human nature through,
(And in due time the world ſhall know it too)
That ſince the flowers of Eden felt the blaſt,
That after man's defection laid all waſte,
Sincerity towards the heart-ſearching God
Has made the new-born creature her abode,
Nor ſhall be found in unregenerate ſouls,
Till the laſt fire burn all between the poles.
Sincerity! why 'tis his only pride,
Weak and imperfect in all grace beſide,
He knows that God demands his heart entire,
And gives him all his juſt demands require.
Without it his pretenſions were as vain,
As having it he deems the world's diſdain;
That great defect would coſt him not alone
Man's favourable judgment, but his own;
His birthright ſhaken, and no longer clear,
Than while his conduct proves his heart ſincere.
Retort the charge, and let the world be told
She boaſts a confidence ſhe does not hold;

That, conſcious of her crimes, ſhe feels inſtead
A cold miſgiving, and a killing dread;
That while in health the ground of her ſupport
Is madly to forget that life is ſhort;
That ſick ſhe trembles knowing ſhe muſt die,
Her hope preſumption, and her faith a lie;
That while ſhe dotes, and dreams that ſhe believes,
She mocks her Maker, and herſelf deceives,
Her utmoſt reach, hiſtorical aſſent,
The doctrines warpt to what they never meant;
That truth itſelf is in her head as dull,
And uſeleſs, as a candle in a ſcull,
And all her love of God a groundleſs claim,
A trick upon the canvaſs, painted flame.
Tell her again, the ſneer upon her face,
And all her cenſures of the work of grace,
Are inſincere, meant only to conceal
A dread ſhe would not, yet is forced to feel;
That in her heart the Chriſtian ſhe reveres,
And while ſhe ſeems to ſcorn him, only fears.
A poet does not work by ſquare or line,
As ſmiths and joiners perfect a deſign;
At leaſt we moderns, our attention leſs,
Beyond the example of our ſires digreſs,
And claim a right to ſcamper and run wide,
Wherever chance, caprice, or fancy guide.

The world and I fortuitouſly met;
I owed a trifle, and have paid the debt;
She did me wrong, I recompenſed the deed,
And having ſtruck the balance, now proceed.
Perhaps however as ſome years have paſſed,
Since ſhe and I converſed together laſt,
And I have lived recluſe in rural ſhades,
Which ſeldom a diſtinct report pervades,
Great changes and new manners have occurred,
And bleſt reforms, that I have never heard,
And ſhe may now be as diſcreet and wiſe,
As once abſurd in all diſcerning eyes.
Sobriety perhaps may now be found,
Where once intoxication preſſed the ground;
The ſubtle and injurious may be juſt,
And he grown chaſte that was the ſlave of luſt;
Arts once eſteemed may be with ſhame diſmiſſed;
Charity may relax the miſer's fiſt;
The gameſter may have caſt his cards away,
Forgot to curſe, and only kneel to pray.
It has indeed been told me (with what weight,
How credibly, 'tis hard for me to ſtate)
That fables old, that ſeemed for ever mute,
Revived are haſtening into freſh repute,
And gods and goddeſſes diſcarded long
Like uſeleſs lumber, or a ſtroller's ſong,

Are bringing into vogue their heathen train,
And Jupiter bids fair to rule again;
That certain feaſts are inſtituted now,
Where Venus hears the lover's tender vow;
That all Olympus through the country roves,
To conſecrate our few remaining groves,
And echo learns politely to repeat
The praiſe of names for ages obſolete;
That having proved the weakneſs, it ſhould ſeem,
Of revelation's ineffectual beam,
To bring the paſſions under ſober ſway,
And give the moral ſprings their proper play,
They mean to try what may at laſt be done,
By ſtout ſubſtantial gods of wood and ſtone,
And whether Roman rites may not produce
The virtues of old Rome for Engliſh uſe.
May ſuch ſucceſs attend the pious plan,
May Mercury once more embelliſh man,
Grace him again with long forgotten arts,
Reclaim his taſte, and brighten up his parts,
Make him athletic as in days of old,
Learned at the bar, in the palæſtra bold,
Diveſt the rougher ſex of female airs,
And teach the ſofter not to copy their's:
The change ſhall pleaſe, nor ſhall it matter aught
Who works the wonder, if it be but wrought,

'Tis time, however, if the caſe ſtands thus,
For us plain folks, and all who ſide with us,
To build our altar, confident and bold,
And ſay as ſtern Elijah ſaid of old,
The ſtrife now ſtands upon a fair award,
If Iſrael's Lord be God, then ſerve the Lord:
If he be ſilent, faith is all a whim,
Then Baal is the God, and worſhip him.
Digreſſion is ſo much in modern uſe,
Thought is ſo rare, and fancy ſo profuſe,
Some never ſeem ſo wide of their intent,
As when returning to the theme they meant;
As mendicants, whoſe buſineſs is to roam,
Make every pariſh but their own their home.
Though ſuch continual zigzags in a book,
Such drunken reelings have an awkward look,
And I had rather creep to what is true,
Than rove and ſtagger with no mark in view;
Yet to conſult a little, ſeemed no crime,
The freakiſh humour of the preſent time:
But now to gather up what ſeems diſperſed,
And touch the ſubject I deſigned at firſt,
May prove, though much beſide the rules of art,
Beſt for the public, and my wiſeſt part.
And firſt, let no man charge me that I mean
To cloſe in fable every ſocial ſcene,

And give good company a face ſevere,
As if they met around a father's bier;
For tell ſome men, that pleaſure all their bent,
And laughter all their work, is life miſpent,
Their wiſdom burſts into this ſage reply,
Then mirth is ſin, and we ſhould always cry.
To find the medium aſks ſome ſhare of wit,
And therefore 'tis a mark fools never hit.
But though life's valley be a vale of tears,
A brighter ſcene beyond that vale appears,
Whoſe glory with a light, that never fades,
Shoots between ſcattered rocks and opening ſhades,
And, while it ſhows the land the ſoul deſires,
The language of the land ſhe ſeeks inſpires.
Thus touched the tongue receives a ſacred cure
Of all that was abſurd, profane, impure;
Held within modeſt bounds the tide of ſpeech
Purſues the courſe, that truth and nature teach;
No longer labours merely to produce
The pomp of ſound, or tinkle without uſe:
Wherever it winds, the ſalutary ſtream,
Sprightly and freſh, enriches every theme,
While all the happy man poſſeſſed before,
The gift of nature, or the claſſic ſtore,
Is made ſubſervient to the grand deſign,
For which heaven formed the faculty divine.

So ſhould an ideot, while at large he ſtrays,
Find the ſweet lyre, on which an artiſt plays,
With raſh and awkward force the chords he ſhakes,
And grins with wonder at the jar he makes;
But let the wiſe and well-inſtructed hand
Once take the ſhell beneath his juſt command,
In gentle ſounds it ſeems as it complained
Of the rude injuries it late ſuſtained,
Till tuned at length to ſome immortal ſong,
It founds Jehovah's name, and pours his praiſe along.

RETIREMENT.

——————— *studiis florens ignobilis oti.*
VIRG. Geor. Lib. 4.

HACKNEYED in buſineſs, wearied at that oar,
Which thouſands, once faſt chained to, quit no more,
But which, when life at ebb runs weak and low,
All wiſh, or ſeem to wiſh, they could forego;
The ſtateſman, lawyer, merchant, man of trade,
Pants for the refuge of ſome rural ſhade,
Where, all his long anxieties forgot
Amid the charms of a ſequeſtered ſpot,
Or recollected only to gild o'er,
And add a ſmile to what was ſweet before,
He may poſſeſs the joys he thinks he ſees,
Lay his old age upon the lap of eaſe,
Improve the remnant of his waſted ſpan,
And, having lived a triſler, die a man.

Thus conſcience pleads her cauſe within the breaſt,
Though long rebelled againſt, not yet ſuppreſſed,
And calls a creature formed for God alone,
For heaven's high purpoſes, and not his own;
Calls him away from ſelfiſh ends and aims,
From what debilitates and what inflames,
From cities humming with a reſtleſs crowd,
Sordid as active, ignorant as loud,
Whoſe higheſt praiſe is that they live in vain,
The dupes of pleaſure, or the ſlaves of gain,
Where works of man are cluſtered cloſe around,
And works of God are hardly to be found,
To regions where, in ſpite of ſin and woe,
Traces of Eden are ſtill ſeen below,
Where mountain, river, foreſt, field, and grove,
Remind him of his Maker's power and love.
'Tis well if, looked for at ſo late a day,
In the laſt ſcene of ſuch a ſenſeleſs play,
True wiſdom will attend his feeble call,
And grace his action ere the curtain fall.
Souls, that have long deſpiſed their heavenly birth,
Their wiſhes all impregnated with earth,
For threeſcore years employed with ceaſeleſs care
In catching ſmoke and feeding upon air,
Converſant only with the ways of men,
Rarely redeem the ſhort remaining ten.

Inveterate habits choke the unfruitful heart,
Their fibres penetrate its tendereſt part,
And, draining its nutritious powers to feed
Their noxious growth, ſtarve every better ſeed.
Happy, if full of days—but happier far,
If, ere we yet diſcern life's evening ſtar,
Sick of the ſervice of a world, that feeds
Its patient drudges with dry chaff and weeds,
We can eſcape from cuſtom's idiot ſway,
To ſerve the Sovereign we were born to obey.
Then ſweet to muſe upon his ſkill diſplayed
(Infinite ſkill) in all that he has made!
To trace in nature's moſt minute deſign
The ſignature and ſtamp of power divine,
Contrivance intricate, expreſſed with eaſe,
Where unaſſiſted ſight no beauty ſees,
The ſhapely limb and lubricated joint,
Within the ſmall dimenſions of a point,
Muſcle and nerve miraculouſly ſpun,
His mighty work, who ſpeaks and it is done,
The inviſible in things ſcarce ſeen revealed,
To whom an atom is an ample field;
To wonder at a thouſand inſect forms,
Theſe hatched, and thoſe reſuſcitated worms,
New life ordained and brighter ſcenes to ſhare,
Once prone on earth, now buoyant upon air,

Whoſe ſhape would make them, had they bulk and ſize,
More hideous foes than fancy can deviſe;
With helmet heads, and dragon ſcales adorned,
The mighty myriads, now ſecurely ſcorned,
Would mock the majeſty of man's high birth,
Deſpiſe his bulwarks, and unpeople earth:
Then with a glance of fancy to ſurvey,
Far as the faculty can ſtretch away,
Ten thouſand rivers poured at his command
From urns, that never fail, through every land;
Theſe like a deluge with impetuous force,
Thoſe winding modeſtly a ſilent courſe;
The cloud-ſurmounting alps, the fruitful vales;
Seas, on which every nation ſpreads her ſails;
The ſun, a world whence other worlds drink light,
The creſcent moon, the diadem of night;
Stars countleſs, each in his appointed place,
Faſt-anchored in the deep abyſs of ſpace—
At ſuch a ſight to catch the poet's flame,
And with a rapture like his own exclaim,
'Theſe are thy glorious works, thou ſource of good,
How dimly ſeen, how faintly underſtood!
Thine, and upheld by thy paternal care,
This univerſal frame, thus wondrous fair;
Thy power divine, and bounty beyond thought,
Adored and praiſed in all that thou haſt wrought.

Abſorbed in that immenſity I ſee,
I ſhrink abaſed, and yet aſpire to thee;
Inſtruct me, guide me to that heavenly day,
Thy words, more clearly than thy works, diſplay,
That, while thy truths my groſſer thoughts refine,
I may reſemble thee and call thee mine.
Oh bleſt proficiency! ſurpaſſing all
That men erroneouſly their glory call,
The recompenſe that arts or arms can yield,
The bar, the ſenate, or the tented field.
Compared with this ſublimeſt life below,
Ye kings and rulers, what have courts to ſhow?
Thus ſtudied, uſed and conſecrated thus,
On earth what is, ſeems formed indeed for us;
Not as the plaything of a froward child,
Fretful unleſs diverted and beguiled,
Much leſs to feed and fan the fatal fires
Of pride, ambition, or impure deſires,
But as a ſcale, by which the ſoul aſcends
From mighty means to more important ends,
Securely, though by ſteps but rarely trod,
Mounts from inferior beings up to God,
And ſees, by no fallacious light or dim,
Earth made for man, and man himſelf for him.
Not that I mean to approve, or would enforce,
A ſuperſtitious and monaſtic courſe:

Truth is not local, God alike pervades
And fills the world of traffic and the ſhades,
And may be ſeared amidſt the buſieſt ſcenes,
Or ſcorned where buſineſs never intervenes.
But 'tis not eaſy with a mind like our's,
Conſcious of weakneſs in its nobleſt powers,
And in a world where, other ills apart,
The roving eye miſleads the careleſs heart,
To limit thought, by nature prone to ſtray
Wherever freakiſh fancy points the way;
To bid the pleadings of ſelf-love be ſtill,
Reſign our own and ſeek our Maker's will;
To ſpread the page of ſcripture, and compare
Our conduct with the laws engraven there;
To meaſure all that paſſes in the breaſt,
Faithfully, fairly, by that ſacred teſt;
To dive into the ſecret deeps within,
To ſpare no paſſion and no favourite ſin,
And ſearch the themes, important above all,
Ourſelves and our recovery from our fall.
But leiſure, ſilence, and a mind releaſed
From anxious thoughts how wealth may be increaſed,
How to ſecure, in ſome propitious hour,
The point of intereſt or the poſt of power,
A ſoul ſerene, and equally retired
From objects too much dreaded or deſired,

Safe from the clamours of perverſe diſpute,
At leaſt are friendly to the great purſuit.
  Opening the map of God's extenſive plan,
We find a little iſle, this life of man;
Eternity's unknown expanſe appears
Circling around and limiting his years.
The buſy race examine, and explore
Each creek and cavern of the dangerous ſhore,
With care collect what in their eyes excels,
Some ſhining pebbles, and ſome weeds and ſhells;
Thus laden, dream that they are rich and great,
And happieſt he that groans beneath his weight:
The waves overtake them in their ſerious play,
And every hour ſweeps multitudes away;
They ſhriek and ſink, ſurvivors ſtart and weep,
Purſue their ſport, and follow to the deep.
A few forſake the throng; with lifted eyes
Aſk wealth of heaven, and gain a real prize,
Truth, wiſdom, grace, and peace like that above,
Sealed with his ſignet, whom they ſerve and love;
Scorned by the reſt, with patient hope they wait
A kind releaſe from their imperfect ſtate,
And unregretted are ſoon ſnatched away
From ſcenes of ſorrow into glorious day.
  Nor theſe alone prefer a life recluſe,
Who ſeek retirement for its proper uſe

The love of change, that lives in every breaſt,
Genius, and temper, and deſire of reſt,
Diſcordant motives in one centre meet,
And each inclines its votary to retreat.
Some minds by nature are averſe to noiſe,
And hate the tumult half the world enjoys,
The lure of avarice, or the pompous prize,
That courts diſplay before ambitious eyes;
The fruits that hang on pleaſure's flowery ſtem,
Whatever enchants them, are no ſnares to them.
To them the deep receſs of duſky groves,
Or foreſt, where the deer ſecurely roves,
The fall of waters, and the ſong of birds,
And hills that echo to the diſtant herds,
Are luxuries excelling all the glare
The world can boaſt, and her chief favourites ſhare.
With eager ſtep, and careleſsly arrayed,
For ſuch a cauſe the poet ſeeks the ſhade,
From all he ſees he catches new delight,
Pleaſed fancy claps her pinions at the ſight,
The riſing or the ſetting orb of day,
The clouds that flit, or ſlowly float away,
Nature in all the various ſhapes ſhe wears,
Frowning in ſtorms, or breathing gentle airs,
The ſnowy robe her wintry ſtate aſſumes,
Her ſummer heats, her fruits, and her perfumes,

All, all alike tranſport the glowing bard,
Succeſs in rhyme his glory and reward.
Oh nature! whoſe Elyſian ſcenes diſcloſe
His bright perfections, at whoſe word they roſe,
Next to that power, who formed thee and ſuſtains,
Be thou the great inſpirer of my ſtrains.
Still, as I touch the lyre, do thou expand
Thy genuine charms, and guide an artleſs hand,
That I may catch a fire but rarely known,
Give uſeful light though I ſhould miſs renown,
And, poring on thy page, whoſe every line
Bears proof of an intelligence divine,
May feel an heart enriched by what it pays,
That builds its glory on its Maker's praiſe.
Woe to the man, whoſe wit diſclaims its uſe,
Glittering in vain, or only to ſeduce,
Who ſtudies nature with a wanton eye,
Admires the work, but ſlips the leſſon by;
His hours of leiſure and receſs employs
In drawing pictures of forbidden joys,
Retires to blazon his own worthleſs name,
Or ſhoot the careleſs with a ſurer aim.

The lover too ſhuns buſineſs and alarms,
Tender idolater of abſent charms.
Saints offer nothing in their warmeſt prayers,
That he devotes not with a zeal like their's;

'Tis conſecration of his heart, ſoul, time,
And every thought that wanders, is a crime.
In ſighs he worſhips his ſupremely fair,
And weeps a ſad libation in deſpair,
Adores a creature, and, devout in vain,
Wins in return an anſwer of diſdain.
As woodbine weds the plant within her reach,
Rough elm, or ſmooth-grained aſh, or gloſſy beech,
In ſpiral rings aſcends the trunk, and lays
Her golden taſſels on the leafy ſprays,
But does a miſchief while ſhe lends a grace,
Straitening its growth by ſuch a ſtrict embrace;
So love, that clings around the nobleſt minds,
Forbids the advancement of the ſoul he binds;
The ſuitor's air indeed he ſoon improves,
And forms it to the taſte of her he loves,
Teaches his eyes a language, and no leſs
Refines his ſpeech and faſhions his addreſs;
But farewell promiſes of happier fruits,
Manly deſigns, and learning's grave purſuits;
Girt with a chain he cannot wiſh to break,
His only bliſs his ſorrow for her ſake;
Who will may pant for glory and excel,
Her ſmile his aim, all higher aims farewell!
Thyrſis, Alexis, or whatever name
May leaſt offend againſt ſo pure a flame,

Though ſage advice of friends the moſt ſincere
Sounds harſhly in ſo delicate an ear,
And lovers of all creatures, tame or wild,
Can leaſt brook management, however mild,
Yet let a poet (poetry diſarms
The fierceſt animals with magic charms)
Riſque an intruſion on thy penſive mood,
And woo and win thee to thy proper good.
Paſtoral images and ſtill retreats,
Umbrageous walks and ſolitary ſeats,
Sweet birds in concert with harmonious ſtreams,
Soft airs, nocturnal vigils, and day dreams,
Are all enchantments in a caſe like thine,
Conſpire againſt thy peace with one deſign,
Sooth thee to make thee but a furer prey,
And feed the fire, that waſtes thy powers away.
Up—God has formed thee with a wiſer view,
Not to be led in chains, but to ſubdue,
Calls thee to cope with enemies, and firſt
Points out a conflict with thyſelf, the worſt.
Woman indeed, a gift he would beſtow
When he deſigned a paradiſe below.
The richeſt earthly boon his hands afford,
Deſerves to be beloved, but not adored.
Poſt away ſwiftly to more active ſcenes,
Collect the ſcattered truths that ſtudy gleans,

Mix with the world, but with its wiſer part,
No longer give an image all thine heart;
Its empire is not her's, nor is it thine,
'Tis God's juſt claim, prerogative divine.
Virtuous and faithful HEBERDEN! whoſe ſkill
Attempts no taſk it cannot well fulfil,
Gives melancholy up to nature's care,
And ſends the patient into purer air.
Look where he comes—in this embowered alcove
Stand cloſe concealed, and ſee a ſtatue move:
Lips buſy, and eyes fixt, foot falling ſlow,
Arms hanging idly down, hands claſped below,
Interpret to the marking eye diſtreſs,
Such as its ſymptoms can alone expreſs.
That tongue is ſilent now; that ſilent tongue
Could argue once, could jeſt or join the ſong,
Could give advice, could cenſure or commend,
Or charm the ſorrows of a drooping friend.
Renounced alike its office and its ſport,
Its briſker and its graver ſtrains fall ſhort;
Both fail beneath a fever's ſecret ſway,
And like a ſummer-brook are paſt away.
This is a ſight for pity to peruſe,
Till ſhe reſemble faintly what ſhe views,
Till ſympathy contract a kindred pain,
Pierced with the woes that ſhe laments in vain.

This, of all maladies that man infeſt,
Claims moſt compaſſion, and receives the leaſt:
Job felt it, when he groaned beneath the rod
And the barbed arrows of a frowning God;
And ſuch emollients as his friends could ſpare,
Friends ſuch as his for modern Jobs prepare.
Bleſt, rather curſt, with hearts that never feel,
Kept ſnug in caſkets of cloſe-hammered ſteel,
With mouths made only to grin wide and eat,
And minds, that deem derided pain a treat,
With limbs of Britiſh oak, and nerves of wire,
And wit, that puppet-prompters might inſpire,
Their ſovereign noſtrum is a clumſy joke
On pangs enforced with God's ſevereſt ſtroke.
But with a ſoul, that ever felt the ſting
Of ſorrow, ſorrow is a ſacred thing:
Not to moleſt, or irritate, or raiſe
A laugh at his expence, is ſlender praiſe;
He, that has not uſurped the name of man,
Does all, and deems too little all, he can
To aſſuage the throbbings of the feſtered part,
And ſtaunch the bleedings of a broken heart.
'Tis not, as heads that never ache ſuppoſe,
Forgery of fancy, and a dream of woes;
Man is an harp whoſe chords elude the ſight,
Each yielding harmony diſpoſed aright

The ſcrews reverſed (a taſk which if he pleaſe
God in a moment executes with eaſe),
Ten thouſand thouſand ſtrings at once go looſe,
Loſt, till he tune them, all their power and uſe.
Then neither heathy wilds, nor ſcenes as fair
As ever recompenſed the peaſant's care,
Nor ſoft declivities with tufted hills,
Nor view of waters turning buſy mills,
Parks in which art preceptreſs nature weds,
Nor gardens interſperſed with flowery beds,
Nor gales, that catch the ſcent of blooming groves,
And waft it to the mourner as he roves,
Can call up life into his faded eye,
That paſſes all he ſees unheeded by:
No wounds like thoſe a wounded ſpirit feels,
No cure for ſuch, till God who makes them, heals.
And thou, ſad ſufferer under nameleſs ill,
That yields not to the touch of human ſkill,
Improve the kind occaſion, underſtand
A Father's frown, and kiſs his chaſtening hand.
To thee the day-ſpring, and the blaze of noon,
The purple evening and reſplendent moon,
The ſtars, that ſprinkled over the vault of night,
Seem drops deſcending in a ſhower of light,
Shine not, or undeſired and hated ſhine,
Seen through the medium of a cloud like thine:

Yet ſeek him, in his favour life is found,
All bliſs beſide a ſhadow or a ſound:
Then heaven, eclipſed ſo long, and this dull earth,
Shall ſeem to ſtart into a ſecond birth;
Nature, aſſuming a more lovely face,
Borrowing a beauty from the works of grace,
Shall be deſpiſed and overlooked no more,
Shall fill thee with delights unfelt before,
Impart to things inanimate a voice,
And bid her mountains and her hills rejoice;
The ſound ſhall run along the winding vales,
And thou enjoy an Eden ere it fails.

Ye groves (the ſtateſman at his deſk exclaims,
Sick of a thouſand diſappointed aims,)
My patrimonial treaſure and my pride,
Beneath your ſhades your gray poſſeſſor hide,
Receive me languiſhing for that repoſe,
The ſervant of the public never knows.
Ye ſaw me once (ah thoſe regretted days,
When boyiſh innocence was all my praiſe!)
Hour after hour delightfully allot
To ſtudies then familiar, ſince forgot,
And cultivate a taſte for ancient ſong,
Catching its ardour as I muſed along;
Nor ſeldom, as propitious heaven might ſend,
What once I valued and could boaſt, a friend,

Were witneſſes how cordially I preſſed
His undiſſembling virtue to my breaſt;
Receive me now, not uncorrupt as then,
Nor guiltleſs of corrupting other men,
But verſed in arts, that, while they ſeem to ſtay
A falling empire, haſten its decay.
To the fair haven of my native home,
The wreck of what I was fatigued I come;
For once I can approve the patriot's voice,
And make the courſe he recommends my choice:
We meet at laſt in one ſincere deſire,
His wiſh and mine both prompt me to retire.
'Tis done—he ſteps into the welcome chaiſe,
Lolls at his eaſe behind four handſome bays,
That whirl away from buſineſs and debate
The diſincumbered Atlas of the ſtate.
Aſk not the boy, who, when the breeze of morn
Firſt ſhakes the glittering drops from every thorn,
Unfolds his flock, then under bank or buſh
Sits linking cherry ſtones, or platting ruſh,
How fair is freedom?—he was always free:
To carve his ruſtic name upon a tree,
To ſnare the mole, or with ill-faſhioned hook
To draw the incautious minnow from the brook,
Are life's prime pleaſures in his ſimple view,
His flock the chief concern he ever knew;

She ſhines but little in his heedleſs eyes,
The good we never miſs we rarely prize:
But aſk the noble drudge in ſtate affairs,
Eſcaped from office and its conſtant cares,
What charms he ſees in freedom's ſmile expreſſed,
In freedom loſt ſo long, now repoſſeſſed;
The tongue, whoſe ſtrains were cogent as commands,
Revered at home, and felt in foreign lands,
Shall own itſelf a ſtammerer in that cauſe,
Or plead its ſilence as its beſt applauſe.
He knows indeed that whether dreſſed or rude,
Wild without art, or artfully ſubdued,
Nature in every form inſpires delight,
But never marked her with ſo juſt a ſight.
Her hedge-row ſhrubs, a variegated ſtore,
With woodbine and wild roſes mantled o'er,
Green balks and furrowed lands, the ſtream, that ſpreads
Its cooling vapour over the dewy meads,
Downs, that almoſt eſcape the enquiring eye,
That melt and fade into the diſtant ſky,
Beauties he lately ſlighted as he paſſed,
Seem all created ſince he travelled laſt.
Maſter of all the enjoyments he deſigned,
No rough annoyance rankling in his mind,
What early philoſophic hours he keeps,
How regular his meals, how ſound he ſleeps!

Not ſounder he, that on the mainmaſt head,
While morning kindles with a windy red,
Begins a long look-out for diſtant land,
Nor quits till evening watch his giddy ſtand,
Then ſwift deſcending with a ſeaman's haſte,
Slips to his hammoc, and forgets the blaſt.
He chooſes company, but not the ſquire's,
Whoſe wit is rudeneſs, whoſe good breeding tires;
Nor yet the parſon's, who would gladly come,
Obſequious when abroad, though proud at home;
Nor can he much affect the neighbouring peer,
Whoſe toe of emulation treads too near;
But wiſely ſeeks a more convenient friend,
With whom, diſmiſſing forms, he may unbend!
A man, whom marks of condeſcending grace
Teach, while they flatter him, his proper place;
Who comes when called, and at a word withdraws,
Speaks with reſerve, and liſtens with applauſe;
Some plain mechanic, who, without pretence
To birth or wit, nor gives nor takes offence;
On whom he reſts well-pleaſed his weary powers,
And talks and laughs away his vacant hours.
The tide of life, ſwift always in its courſe,
May run in cities with a briſker force,
But no where with a current ſo ſerene,
Or half ſo clear, as in the rural ſcene.

Yet how fallacious is all earthly bliſs,
What obvious truths the wiſeſt heads may miſs;
Some pleaſures live a month, and ſome a year,
But ſhort the date of all we gather here;
No happineſs is felt, except the true,
That does not charm thee more for being new.
This obſervation, as it chanced, not made,
Or if the thought occurred, not duly weighed,
He ſighs—for after all by ſlow degrees
The ſpot he loved, has loſt the power to pleaſe;
To croſs his ambling pony day by day,
Seems at the beſt but dreaming life away;
The proſpect, ſuch as might enchant deſpair,
He views it not, or ſees no beauty there;
With aching heart, and diſcontented looks,
Returns at noon to billiards or to books,
But feels, while graſping at his faded joys,
A ſecret thirſt of his renounced employs.
He chides the tardineſs of every poſt,
Pants to be told of battles won or loſt,
Blames his own indolence, obſerves, though late,
'Tis criminal to leave a ſinking ſtate,
Flies to the levee, and received with grace
Kneels, kiſſes hands, and ſhines again in place.
Suburban villas, highway-ſide retreats,
That dread the encroachment of our growing ſtreets,

Tight boxes, neatly ſaſhed, and in a blaze
With all a July ſun's collected rays,
Delight the citizen, who, gaſping there,
Breathes clouds of duſt, and calls it country air.
Oh ſweet retirement, who would balk the thought,
That could afford retirement, or could not?
'Tis ſuch an eaſy walk, ſo ſmooth and ſtraight,
The ſecond mileſtone fronts the garden gate;
A ſtep if fair, and if a ſhower approach,
You find ſafe ſhelter in the next ſtage-coach.
There, priſoned in a parlour ſnug and ſmall,
Like bottled waſps upon a ſouthern wall,
The man of buſineſs and his friends compreſſed,
Forget their labours, and yet find no reſt;
But ſtill 'tis rural—trees are to be ſeen
From every window, and the fields are green;
Ducks paddle in the pond before the door,
And what could a remoter ſcene ſhow more?
A ſenſe of elegance we rarely find
The portion of a mean or vulgar mind,
And ignorance of better things makes man,
Who cannot much, rejoice in what he can;
And he, that deems his leiſure well beſtowed
In contemplation of a turnpike road,
Is occupied as well, employs his hours
As wiſely, and as much improves his powers,

As he, that ſlumbers in pavilions graced
With all the charms of an accompliſhed taſte.
Yet hence, alas! inſolvencies; and hence
The unpitied victim of ill-judged expence,
From all his wearifome engagements freed,
Shakes hands with bufineſs, and retires indeed.
Your prudent grand-mammas, ye modern belles,
Content with Briſtol, Bath, and Tunbridge-wells,
When health required it would conſent to roam,
Elſe more attached to pleaſures found at home.
But now alike, gay widow, virgin, wife,
Ingenious to diverſify dull life,
In coaches, chaiſes, caravans, and hoys,
Fly to the coaſt for daily, nightly joys,
And all, impatient of dry land, agree
With one conſent to ruſh into the ſea.—
Ocean exhibits, fathomleſs and broad,
Much of the power and majeſty of God.
He ſwathes about the ſwelling of the deep,
That ſhines and reſts, as infants ſmile and ſleep;
Vaſt as it is, it anſwers as it flows
The breathings of the lighteſt air that blows;
Curling and whitening over all the waſte,
The riſing waves obey the increaſing blaſt,
Abrupt and horrid as the tempeſt roars,
Thunder and flaſh upon the ſtedfaſt ſhores,

Till he, that rides the whirlwind, checks the rein,
Then all the world of waters ſleeps again.—
Nereids or Dryads, as the faſhion leads,
Now in the floods, now panting in the meads,
Votaries of pleaſure ſtill, wherever ſhe dwells,
Near barren rocks, in palaces, or cells,
Oh grant a poet leave to recommend
(A poet fond of nature, and your friend)
Her ſlighted works to your admiring view;
Her works muſt needs excel, who faſhioned you.
Would ye, when rambling in your morning ride,
With ſome unmeaning coxcomb at your ſide,
Condemn the prattler for his idle pains,
To waſte unheard the muſic of his ſtrains,
And deaf to all the impertinence of tongue,
That, while it courts, affronts and does you wrong,
Mark well the finiſhed plan without a fault,
The ſeas globoſe and huge, the overarching vault,
Earth's millions daily fed, a world employed
In gathering plenty yet to be enjoyed,
Till gratitude grew vocal in the praiſe
Of God, beneficent in all his ways;
Graced with ſuch wiſdom, how would beauty ſhine!
Ye want but that to ſeem indeed divine.
Anticipated rents, and bills unpaid,
Force many a ſhining youth into the ſhade,

Not to redeem his time, but his eſtate,
And play the fool, but at a cheaper rate.
There, hid in loathed obſcurity, removed
From pleaſures left, but never more beloved,
He juſt endures, and with a ſickly ſpleen
Sighs over the beauties of the charming ſcene.
Nature indeed looks prettily in rhyme;
Streams tinkle ſweetly in poetic chime:
The warblings of the blackbird, clear and ſtrong,
Are muſical enough in Thomſon's ſong;
And Cobham's groves, and Windſor's green retreats,
When Pope deſcribes them, have a thouſand ſweets;
He likes the country, but in truth muſt own,
Moſt likes it, when he ſtudies it in town.

Poor Jack—no matter who—for when I blame
I pity, and muſt therefore ſink the name,
Lived in his ſaddle, loved the chaſe, the courſe,
And always, ere he mounted, kiſſed his horſe.
The eſtate, his ſires had owned in ancient years,
Was quickly diſtanced, matched againſt a peer's.
Jack vaniſhed, was regretted and forgot;
'Tis wild good-nature's never-failing lot.
At length, when all had long ſuppoſed him dead,
By cold ſubmerſion, razor, rope, or lead,
My lord, alighting at his uſual place,
The Crown, took notice of an oſtler's face.

Jack knew his friend, but hoped in that diſguiſe
He might eſcape the moſt obſerving eyes,
And whiſtling, as if unconcerned and gay,
Curried his nag, and looked another way.
Convinced at laſt, upon a nearer view,
'Twas he, the ſame, the very Jack he knew,
Overwhelmed at once with wonder, grief, and joy,
He preſſed him much to quit his baſe employ;
His countenance, his purſe, his heart, his hand,
Influence and power, were all at his command:
Peers are not always generous as well-bred,
But Granby was, meant truly what he ſaid.
Jack bowed, and was obliged—confeſſed t'was ſtrange,
That ſo retired he ſhould not wiſh a change,
But knew no medium between guzzling beer,
And his old ſtint—three thouſand pounds a year.
Thus ſome retire to nouriſh hopeleſs woe;
Some ſeeking happineſs not found below;
Some to comply with humour, and a mind
To ſocial ſcenes by nature diſinclined;
Some ſwayed by faſhion, ſome by deep diſguſt;
Some ſelf-impoveriſhed, and becauſe they muſt;
But few, that court Retirement, are aware
Of half the toils they muſt encounter there.
Lucrative offices are ſeldom loſt
For want of powers proportioned to the poſt:

Give even a dunce the employment he deſires,
And he ſoon finds the talents it requires;
A buſineſs with an income at it's heels
Furniſhes always oil for its own wheels.
But in his arduous enterprize to cloſe
His active years with indolent repoſe,
He finds the labours of that ſtate exceed
His utmoſt faculties, ſevere indeed.
'Tis eaſy to reſign a toilſome place,
But not to manage leiſure with a grace;
Abſence of occupation is not reſt,
A mind quite vacant is a mind diſtreſſed.
The veteran ſteed, excuſed his taſk at length,
In kind compaſſion of his failing ſtrength,
And turned into the park or mead to graze,
Exempt from future ſervice all his days,
There feels a pleaſure perfect in its kind,
Ranges at liberty, and ſnuffs the wind:
But when his lord would quit the buſy road,
To taſte a joy like that he had beſtowed,
He proves leſs happy than his favoured brute,
A life of eaſe a difficult purſuit.
Thought, to the man that never thinks, may ſeem
As natural as when aſleep to dream;
But reveries (for human minds will act)
Specious in ſhow, impoſſible in fact,

Thoſe flimſy webs, that break as ſoon as wrought,
Attain not to the dignity of thought:
Nor yet the ſwarms, that occupy the brain,
Where dreams of dreſs, intrigue, and pleaſure reign;
Nor ſuch as uſeleſs converſation breeds,
Or luſt engenders, and indulgence feeds.
Whence, and what are we? to what end ordained?
What means the drama by the world ſuſtained?
Buſineſs or vain amuſement, care or mirth,
Divide the frail inhabitants of earth.
Is duty a mere ſport, or an employ?
Life an intruſted talent, or a toy?
Is there, as reaſon, conſcience, ſcripture, ſay,
Cauſe to provide for a great future day,
When, earth's aſſigned duration at an end,
Man ſhall be ſummoned and the dead attend?
The trumpet—will it ſound? the curtain riſe?
And ſhow the auguſt tribunal of the ſkies,
Where no prevarication ſhall avail,
Where eloquence and artifice ſhall fail,
The pride of arrogant diſtinctions fall,
And conſcience and our conduct judge us all?
Pardon me, ye that give the midnight oil
To learned cares or philoſophic toil,
Though I revere your honourable names,
Your uſeful labours and important aims,

And hold the world indebted to your aid,
Enriched with the diſcoveries ye have made;
Yet let me ſtand excuſed, if I eſteem
A mind employed on ſo ſublime a theme,
Puſhing her bold inquiry to the date
And outline of the preſent tranſient ſtate,
And, after poiſing her adventurous wings,
Settling at laſt upon eternal things,
Far more intelligent, and better taught
The ſtrenuous uſe of profitable thought,
Than ye, when happieſt, and enlightened moſt,
And higheſt in renown, can juſtly boaſt.

A mind unnerved, or indiſpoſed to bear
The weight of ſubjects worthieſt of her care,
Whatever hopes a change of ſcene inſpires,
Muſt change her nature, or in vain retires.
An idler is a watch, that wants both hands,
As uſeleſs if it goes as when it ſtands.
Books therefore, not the ſcandal of the ſhelves,
In which lewd ſenſualiſts print out themſelves;
Nor thoſe, in which the ſtage gives vice a blow,
With what ſucceſs let modern manners ſhow;
Nor his, who for the bane of thouſands born
Built God a church, and laughed his word to ſcorn,
Skilful alike to ſeem devout and juſt,
And ſtab religion with a ſly ſide-thruſt;

Nor thoſe of learned philologiſts, who chaſe
A panting ſyllable through time and ſpace,
Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark,
To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's ark;
But ſuch as learning without falſe pretence,
The friend of truth, the aſſociate of ſound ſenſe,
And ſuch as in the zeal of good deſign,
Strong judgment labouring in the ſcripture mine,
All ſuch as manly and great ſouls produce,
Worthy to live, and of eternal uſe:
Behold in theſe what leiſure hours demand,
Amuſement and true knowledge hand in hand.
Luxury gives the mind a childiſh caſt,
And while ſhe poliſhes, perverts the taſte;
Habits of cloſe attention, thinking heads,
Become more rare as diſſipation ſpreads,
Till authors hear at length one general cry,
Tickle and entertain us, or we die.
The loud demand, from year to year the ſame,
Beggars invention and makes fancy lame.
Till farce itſelf, moſt mournfully jejune,
Calls for the kind aſſiſtance of a tune;
And novels (witneſs every month's review)
Belie their name, and offer nothing new.
The mind, relaxing into needful ſport,
Should turn to writers of an abler ſort,

Whoſe wit well managed, and whoſe claſſic ſtyle,
Give truth a luſtre, and make wiſdom ſmile.
Friends (for I cannot ſtint, as ſome have done,
Too rigid in my view, that name to one;
Though one, I grant it, in the generous breaſt
Will ſtand advanced a ſtep above the reſt:
Flowers by that name promiſcuouſly we call,
But one, the roſe, the regent of them all)—
Friends, not adopted with a ſchool-boy's haſte,
But choſen with a nice diſcerning taſte,
Well-born, well-diſciplined, who, placed apart
From vulgar minds, have honour much at heart,
And, though the world may think the ingredients odd,
The love of virtue, and the fear of God!
Such friends prevent what elſe would ſoon ſucceed,
A temper ruſtic as the life we lead,
And keep the poliſh of the manners clean,
As their's, who buſtle in the buſieſt ſcene;
For ſolitude, however ſome may rave,
Seeming a ſanctuary, proves a grave,
A ſepulchre, in which the living lie,
Where all good qualities grow ſick and die.
I praiſe the Frenchman *, his remark was ſhrewd—
How ſweet, how paſſing ſweet, is ſolitude!

* Bruyere.

But grant me ſtill a friend in my retreat,
Whom I may whiſper—ſolitude is ſweet.
Yet neither theſe delights, nor aught beſide,
That appetite can aſk, or wealth provide,
Can ſave us always from a tedious day,
Or ſhine the dulneſs of ſtill life away;
Divine communion, carefully enjoyed,
Or ſought with energy, muſt fill the void.
Oh ſacred art, to which alone life owes
Its happieſt ſeaſons, and a peaceful cloſe,
Scorned in a world, indebted to that ſcorn
For evils daily felt and hardly borne,
Not knowing thee, we reap with bleeding hands
Flowers of rank odour upon thorny lands,
And, while experience cautions us in vain,
Graſp ſeeming happineſs, and find it pain.
Deſpondence, ſelf-deſerted in her grief,
Loſt by abandoning her own relief,
Murmuring and ungrateful diſcontent,
That ſcorns afflictions mercifully meant,
Thoſe humours tart as wines upon the fret,
Which idleneſs and wearineſs beget;
Theſe, and a thouſand plagues, that haunt the breaſt,
Fond of the phantom of an earthly reſt,
Divine communion chaſes, as the day
Drives to their dens the obedient beaſts of prey.

See Judah's promiſed king, bereft of all,
Driven out an exile from the face of Saul,
To diſtant caves the lonely wanderer flies,
To ſeek that peace a tyrant's frown denies.
Hear the ſweet accents of his tuneful voice,
Hear him, overwhelmed with ſorrow, yet rejoice;
No womaniſh or wailing grief has part,
No, not a moment, in his royal heart;
'Tis manly muſic, ſuch as martyrs make,
Suffering with gladneſs for a Saviour's ſake;
His ſoul exults, hope animates his lays,
The ſenſe of mercy kindles into praiſe,
And wilds, familiar with a lion's roar,
Ring with ecſtatic ſounds unheard before:
'Tis love like his, that can alone defeat
The foes of man, or make a deſert ſweet.
Religion does not cenſure or exclude
Unnumbered pleaſures harmleſsly purſued;
To ſtudy culture, and with artful toil
To meliorate and tame the ſtubborn ſoil;
To give diſſimilar yet fruitful lands
The grain, or herb, or plant, that each demands;
To cheriſh virtue in an humble ſtate,
And ſhare the joys your bounty may create;
To mark the matchleſs workings of the power,
That ſhuts within its ſeed the future flower,

Bids theſe in elegance of form excel,
In colour theſe, and thoſe delight the ſmell,
Sends nature forth the daughter of the ſkies,
To dance on earth, and charm all human eyes;
To teach the canvaſs innocent deceit,
Or lay the landſcape on the ſnowy ſheet—
Theſe, theſe are arts purſued without a crime,
That leave no ſtain upon the wing of time.
Me poetry (or rather notes that aim
Feebly and vainly at poetic fame)
Employs, ſhut out from more important views,
Faſt by the banks of the ſlow winding Ouſe;
Content if thus ſequeſtered I may raiſe
A monitor's, though not a poet's praiſe,
And while I teach an art too little known,
To cloſe life wiſely, may not waſte my own.

THE YEARLY DISTRESS,

OR

TITHING TIME AT STOCK, IN ESSEX.

Verſes addreſſed to a Country Clergyman complaining of the diſagreeableneſs of the day annually appointed for receiving the Dues at the Parſonage.

COME, ponder well, for 'tis no jeſt,
To laugh it would be wrong,
The troubles of a worthy prieſt
The burden of my ſong.

This prieſt he merry is and blithe
Three quarters of a year,
But oh! it cuts him like a ſithe,
When tithing time draws near.

He then is full of fright and fears,
As one at point to die,
And long before the day appears
He heaves up many a ſigh.

For then the farmers come jog, jog,
  Along the miry road,
Each heart as heavy as a log,
  To make their payments good.

In ſooth, the ſorrow of ſuch days
  Is not to be expreſſed,
When he that takes and he that pays
  Are both alike diſtreſſed.

Now all, unwelcome, at his gates
  The clumſy ſwains alight,
With rueful faces and bald pates—
  He trembles at the ſight.

And well he may, for well he knows
  Each bumpkin of the clan,
Inſtead of paying what he owes,
  Will cheat him if he can.

So in they come—each makes his leg,
  And flings his head before,
And looks as if he came to beg,
  And not to quit a ſcore.

'And how does miſs and madam do,
'The little boy and all?'
'All tight and well. And how do you,
'Good Mr. What-d'ye-call?'

The dinner comes, and down they ſit:
Were ever ſuch hungry folk?
There's little talking, and no wit;
It is no time to joke.

One wipes his noſe upon his ſleeve,
One ſpits upon the floor,
Yet, not to give offence or grieve,
Holds up the cloth before.

The punch goes round, and they are dull
And lumpiſh ſtill as ever;
Like barrels with their bellies full,
They only weigh the heavier.

At length the buſy time begins.
'Come, neighbours, we muſt wag—'
The money chinks, down drop their chins,
Each lugging out his bag.

One talks of mildew and of froſt,
And one of ſtorms of hail,
And one of pigs, that he has loſt
By maggots at the tail.

Quoth one, 'A rarer man than you
'In pulpit none ſhall hear:
'But yet, methinks, to tell you true,
'You ſell it plaguy dear.'

Oh, why are farmers made ſo coarſe,
Or clergy made ſo fine!
A kick, that ſcarce would move a horſe,
May kill a ſound divine.

Then let the boobies ſtay at home;
'Twould coſt him, I dare ſay,
Leſs trouble taking twice the ſum,
Without the clowns that pay.

SONNET

ADDRESSED TO

HENRY COWPER, Esq.

On his emphatical and intereſting Delivery of the Defence of Warren Haſtings, Eſq. in the Houſe of Lords.

Cowper, whoſe ſilver voice, taſked ſometimes hard,
Legends prolix delivers in the ears
(Attentive when thou readeſt) of England's peers,'
Let verſe at length yield thee thy juſt reward.
Thou waſt not heard with drowſy diſregard,
Expending late on all that length of plea
Thy generous powers, but ſilence honoured thee
Mute as ever gazed on Orator or Bard.
Thou art not voice alone, but haſt beſide
Both heart and head; and couldſt with muſic ſweet
Of Attic phraſe and ſenatorial tone,
Like thy renowned forefathers, far and wide
Thy fame diffuſe, praiſed not for utterance meet
Of *others'* ſpeech, but magic of *thy own.*

Lines addreſſed to

DR. DARWIN,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOTANIC GARDEN."

Two Poets, * (poets, by report,
Not oft ſo well agree)
Sweet Harmoniſt of Flora's court!
Conſpire to honour Thee.

They beſt can judge a poet's worth,
Who oft themſelves have known
The pangs of a poetic birth
By labours of their own.

We therefore pleaſed extol thy ſong,
Though various yet complete,
Rich in embelliſhment as ſtrong,
And learned as it is ſweet.

No envy mingles with our praiſe,
Though, could our hearts repine
At any poet's happier lays,
They would—they muſt at thine.

* Alluding to the poem by Mr. Hayley, which accompanied theſe lines.

But we, in mutual bondage knit
Of friendſhip's cloſeſt tie,
Can gaze on even Darwin's wit
With an unjaundiced eye;

And deem the Bard, whoever he be,
And howſoever known,
Who would not twine a wreath for Thee,
Unworthy of his own.

ON

MRS. MONTAGUE'S

FEATHER-HANGINGS.

THE birds put off their every hue
To dreſs a room for Montague.
The Peacock ſends his heavenly dyes,
His *rainbows* and his *ſtarry eyes*;
The Pheaſant, plumes, which round infold
His mantling neck with downy gold;
The Cock, his arched tail's azure ſhow;
And, river-blanched, the Swan, his ſnow.

All tribes beſide of Indian name,
That gloſſy ſhine or vivid flame,
Where riſes, and where ſets the day,
Whatever they boaſt of rich and gay,
Contribute to the gorgeous plan,
Proud to advance it all they can.
This plumage neither daſhing ſhower,
Nor blaſts, that ſhake the dripping bower,
Shall drench again or diſcompoſe,
But ſcreened from every ſtorm that blows,
It boaſts a ſplendour ever new,
Safe with protecting Montague.
To the ſame patroneſs reſort,
Secure of favour at her court,
Strong Genius, from whoſe forge of thought
Forms riſe, to quick perfection wrought,
Which, though new-born, with vigour move,
Like Pallas ſpringing armed from Jove—
Imagination ſcattering round
Wild roſes over furrowed ground,
Which labour of his frown beguile,
And teach Philoſophy a ſmile—
Wit flaſhing on Religion's ſide,
Whoſe fires to ſacred Truth applied,
The gem, though luminous before,
Obtrude on human notice more,

Like ſun-beams on the golden height
Of ſome tall temple playing bright—
Well-tutored Learning, from his books
Diſmiſſed with grave, not haughty, looks,
Their order on his ſhelves exact,
Not more harmonious or compact
Than that, to which he keeps confined
The various treaſures of his mind—
All theſe to Montague's repair,
Ambitious of a ſhelter there.
There Genius, Learning, Fancy, Wit,
Their ruffled plumage calm refit,
(For ſtormy troubles loudeſt roar
Around their flight who higheſt ſoar)
And in her eye, and by her aid,
Shine ſafe without a fear to fade.
She thus maintains divided ſway
With yon bright regent of the day;
The Plume and Poet both we know.
Their luſtre to his influence owe;
And ſhe the works of Phœbus aiding,
Both Poet ſaves and Plume from fading.

VERSES

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ALEX. SELKIRK, DURING HIS SOLITARY ABODE IN THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ.

I.

I AM monarch of all I ſurvey,
My right there is none to diſpute;
From the centre all round to the ſea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
Oh ſolitude! where are the charms,
That ſages have ſeen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midſt of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place.

II.

I am out of humanity's reach,
I muſt finiſh my journey alone,
Never hear the ſweet muſic of ſpeech,
I ſtart at the ſound of my own.
The beaſts, that roam over the plain,
My form with indifference ſee;
They are ſo unacquainted with man,
Their tameneſs is ſhocking to me.

III.

Society, friendſhip, and love,
Divinely beſtowed upon man,
Oh, had I the wings of a dove,
How ſoon would I taſte you again!
My ſorrows I then might aſſuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wiſdom of age,
And be cheered by the ſallies of youth.

IV.

Religion! what treaſure untold
Reſides in that heavenly word!
More precious than ſilver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the ſound of the church-going bell
Theſe vallies and rocks never heard,
Never ſighed at the ſound of a knell,
Or ſmiled when a ſabbath appeared.

V.

Ye winds, that have made me your ſport,
Convey to this deſolate ſhore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land, I ſhall viſit no more.
My friends, do they now and then ſend
A wiſh or a thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to ſee.

VI.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!
Compared with the ſpeed of its flight,
The tempeſt itſelf lags behind,
And the ſwift winged arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I ſeem to be there;
But alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to deſpair.

VII.

But the ſea-fowl is gone to her neſt,
The beaſt is laid down in his lair;
Even here is a ſeaſon of reſt,
And I to my cabin repair.
There's mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought!
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

ON THE PROMOTION OF

EDWARD THURLOW, ESQ.

TO THE LORD HIGH CHANCELLORSHIP OF ENGLAND.

I.

Round Thurlow's head in early youth,
And in his ſportive days,
Fair ſcience poured the light of truth,
And genius ſhed his rays.

II.

See! with united wonder cried
The experienced and the ſage,
Ambition in a boy ſupplied
With all the ſkill of age!

III.

Diſcernment, eloquence, and grace
Proclaim him born to ſway
The balance in the higheſt place,
And bear the palm away.

IV.

The praiſe beſtowed was juſt and wiſe;
He ſprang impetuous forth
Secure of conqueſt, where the prize
Attends ſuperior worth.

V.

So the beſt courſer on the plain
Ere yet he ſtarts is known,
And does but at the goal obtain
What all had deemed his own.

ODE TO PEACE.

I.

Come, peace of mind, delightful gueſt!
Return and make thy downy neſt
Once more in this ſad heart:
Nor riches I nor power purſue,
Nor hold forbidden joys in view;
We therefore need not part.

II.

Where wilt thou dwell, if not with me,
From avarice and ambition free,
And pleaſure's fatal wiles?
For whom, alas! doſt thou prepare
The ſweets, that I was wont to ſhare,
The banquet of thy ſmiles?

III.

The great, the gay, ſhall they partake
The heaven that thou alone canſt make?
And wilt thou quit the ſtream,
That murmurs through the dewy mead,
The grove and the ſequeſtered ſhed,
To be a gueſt with them?

IV.

For thee I panted, thee I prized,
For thee I gladly ſacrificed
Whatever I loved before;
And ſhall I ſee thee ſtart away,
And helpleſs, hopeleſs, hear thee ſay—
Farewell! we meet no more?

HUMAN FRAILTY.

I.

WEAK and irreſolute is man;
The purpoſe of to-day,
Woven with pains into his plan,
To-morrow rends away.

II.

The bow well bent, and ſmart the ſpring,
Vice ſeems already ſlain;
But paſſion rudely ſnaps the ſtring,
And it revives again.

III.

Some foe to his upright intent
Finds out his weaker part;
Virtue engages his aſſent,
But pleaſure wins his heart.

IV.

'Tis here the folly of the wiſe
Through all his art we view;
And, while his tongue the charge denies,
His conſcience owns it true.

ON OBSERVING

SOME NAMES OF LITTLE NOTE

RECORDED IN THE BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA.

Oh, fond attempt to give a deathleſs lot
To names ignoble, born to be forgot!
In vain, recorded in hiſtoric page,
They court the notice of a future age:
Thoſe twinkling tiny luſtres of the land
Drop one by one from Fame's neglecting hand;
Lethæan gulphs receive them as they fall,
And dark oblivion ſoon abſorbs them all.
So when a child, as playful children uſe,
Has burnt to tinder a ſtale laſt year's news,
The flame extinct, he views the roving fire—
There goes my lady, and there goes the ſquire,
There goes the parſon, oh! illuſtrious ſpark,
And there, ſcarce leſs illuſtrious, goes the clerk!

REPORT

OF AN ADJUDGED CASE, NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY OF THE BOOKS.

I.

BETWEEN Noſe and Eyes a ſtrange conteſt aroſe,
The ſpectacles ſet them unhappily wrong;
The point in diſpute was, as all the world knows,
To which the ſaid ſpectacles ought to belong.

II.

So Tongue was the lawyer, and argued the cauſe
With a great deal of ſkill, and a wig full of learning;
While chief baron Ear ſat to balance the laws,
So famed for his talent in nicely diſcerning.

III.

In behalf of the Noſe it will quickly appear,
And your lordſhip, he ſaid, will undoubtedly find
That the Noſe has had ſpectacles always in wear,
Which amounts to poſſeſſion time out of mind.

IV.

Then holding the ſpectacles up to the court—
Your lordſhip obſerves they are made with a ſtraddle,
As wide as the ridge of the Noſe is; in ſhort,
Deſigned to ſit cloſe to it, juſt like a ſaddle.

V.

Again, would your lordſhip a moment ſuppoſe
('Tis a caſe that has happened, and may be again)
That the viſage or countenance had not a Noſe,
Pray who would, or who could, wear ſpectacles then?

VI.

On the whole it appears, and my argument ſhows
With a reaſoning, the court will never condemn,
That the ſpectacles plainly were made for the Noſe,
And the Noſe was as plainly intended for them.

VII.

Then ſhifting his ſide, (as a lawyer knows how)
He pleaded again in behalf of the Eyes:
But what were his arguments few people know,
For the court did not think they were equally wiſe.

VIII.

So his lordſhip decreed with a grave ſolemn tone,
Deciſive and clear, without one if or but—
That, whenever the Noſe put his ſpectacles on,
By day-light or candle-light—Eyes ſhould be ſhut!

ON THE

BURNING OF LORD MANSFIELD'S LIBRARY,

TOGETHER WITH HIS MSS.

BY THE MOB, IN THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1780.

I.

So then—the Vandals of our iſle,
Sworn foes to ſenſe and law,
Have burnt to duſt a nobler pile
Than ever Roman ſaw!

II.

And MURRAY ſighs over Pope and Swift,
And many a treaſure more,
The well-judged purchaſe and the gift,
That graced his lettered ſtore.

III.

Their pages mangled, burnt, and torn,
The loſs was *his alone*;
But ages yet to come ſhall mourn
The burning of *his own*.

ON THE SAME.

I.

When wit and genius meet their doom
In all devouring flame,
They tell us of the fate of Rome,
And bid us fear the fame.

II.

Over Murray's loſs the muſes wept,
They felt the rude alarm,
Yet bleſſed the guardian care, that kept
His ſacred head from harm.

III.

There memory, like the bee, that's fed
From Flora's balmy ſtore,
The quinteſſence of all he read
Had treaſured up before.

IV.

The lawleſs herd, with fury blind,
Have done him cruel wrong;
The flowers are gone—but ſtill we find
The honey on his tongue.

THE LOVE OF THE WORLD REPROVED;

OR,

HYPOCRISY DETECTED *.

THUS ſays the prophet of the Turk,
Good muſſulman, abſtain from pork;
There is a part in every ſwine
No friend or follower of mine
May taſte, whatever his inclination,
On pain of excommunication.
Such Mahomet's myſterious charge,
And thus he left the point at large.
Had he the ſinful part expreſſed,
They might with ſafety eat the reſt;
But for one piece they thought it hard.
From the whole hog to be debarred;
And ſet their wit at work to find
What joint the prophet had in mind.

* It may be proper to inform the reader that this piece has already appeared in print, having found its way, though with ſome unneceſſary additions by an unknown hand, into the Leeds Journal, without the author's privity.

The honours of his ebon poll
Were brighter than the ſleekeſt mole,
His boſom of the hue,
With which Aurora decks the ſkies,
When piping winds ſhall ſoon ariſe
To ſweep up all the dew.

Above, below, in all the houſe,
Dire foe alike to bird and mouſe,
No cat had leave to dwell;
And Bully's cage ſupported ſtood
On props of ſmootheſt-ſhaven wood,
Large-built and latticed well.

Well-latticed—but the grate, alas!
Not rough with wire of ſteel or braſs,
For Bully's plumage ſake,
But ſmooth with wands from Ouſe's ſide,
With which, when neatly peeled and dried,
The ſwains their baſkets make.

Night veiled the pole. All ſeemed ſecure.
When led by inſtinct ſharp and ſure,
Subſiſtence to provide,
A beaſt forth-ſallied on the ſcout,
Long-backed, long-tailed, with whiſkered ſnout,
And badger-coloured hide.

He, entering at the ſtudy-door,
Its ample area 'gan explore;
And ſomething in the wind
Conjectured, ſniffing round and round,
Better than all the books he found,
Food chiefly for the mind.

Juſt then, by adverſe fate impreſſed,
A dream diſturbed poor Bully's reſt;
In ſleep he ſeemed to view
A rat, faſt-clinging to the cage,
And ſcreaming at the ſad preſage,
Awoke and found it true.

For, aided both by ear and ſcent,
Right to his mark the monſter went—
Ah, muſe! forbear to ſpeak
Minute the horrors that enſued;
His teeth were ſtrong, the cage was wood—
He left poor Bully's beak.

He left it—but he ſhould have ta'en;
That beak, whence iſſued many a ſtrain
Of ſuch mellifluous tone,
Might have repaid him well, I wote,
For ſilencing ſo ſweet a throat,
Faſt ſet within his own.

Maria weeps—the Muſes mourn—
So, when by Bacchanalians torn,
On Thracian Hebrus' ſide
The tree-enchanter Orpheus fell;
His head alone remained to tell
The cruel death he died.

THE ROSE.

THE roſe had been waſhed, juſt waſhed in a ſhower,
Which Mary to Anna conveyed,
The plentiful moiſture incumbered the flower,
And weighed down its beautiful head.

The cup was all filled, and the leaves were all wet,
And it ſeemed to a fanciful view,
To weep for the buds it had left with regret,
On the flouriſhing buſh where it grew.

I haſtily ſeized it, unfit as it was,
For a noſegay, ſo dripping and drown'd,
And ſwinging it rudely, too rudely, alas!
I ſnapped it, it fell to the ground.

And ſuch, I exclaimed, is the pitileſs part
Some act by the delicate mind,
Regardleſs of wringing and breaking a heart
Already to ſorrow reſigned.

This elegant roſe, had I ſhaken it leſs,
Might have bloomed with its owner a while,
And the tear, that is wiped with a little addreſs,
May be followed perhaps by a ſmile.

THE DOVES.

I.

Reasoning at every ſtep he treads,
Man yet miſtakes his way,
While meaner things, whom inſtinct leads,
Are rarely known to ſtray.

II.

One ſilent eve I wandered late,
And heard the voice of love;
The turtle thus addreſſed her mate,
And ſoothed the liſtening dove;

III.

Our mutual bond of faith and truth
No time ſhall diſengage,
Thoſe bleſſings of our early youth
Shall cheer our lateſt age:

IV.

While innocence without diſguiſe,
And conſtancy ſincere,
Shall fill the circles of thoſe eyes,
And mine can read them there;

V.

Thoſe ills, that wait on all below,
Shall ne'er be felt by me,
Or gently felt, and only ſo,
As being ſhared with thee.

VI.

When lightnings flaſh among the trees,
Or kites are hovering near,
I fear left thee alone they ſeize,
And know no other fear.

VII.

'Tis then I feel myſelf a wife,
And preſs thy wedded ſide,
Reſolved an union formed for life
Death never ſhall divide.

VIII.

But oh! if fickle and unchaſte,
(Forgive a tranſient thought)
Thou could become unkind at laſt,
And ſcorn thy preſent lot,

IX.

No need of lightnings from on high,
Or kites with cruel beak;
Denied the endearments of thine eye,
This widowed heart would break.

X.

Thus ſang the ſweet ſequeſtered bird,
Soft as the paſſing wind,
And I recorded what I heard,
A leſſon for mankind.

A FABLE.

A RAVEN, while with gloſſy breaſt
Her new-laid eggs ſhe fondly preſſed,
And on her wicker-work high mounted,
Her chickens prematurely counted,
(A fault philoſophers might blame
If quite exempted from the ſame)
Enjoyed at eaſe the genial day;
'Twas April as the bumpkins ſay,
The legiſlature called it May.
But ſuddenly a wind as high,
As ever ſwept a winter ſky,
Shook the young leaves about her ears,
And filled her with a thouſand fears,
Left the rude blaſt ſhould ſnap the bough,
And ſpread her golden hopes below.
But juſt at eve the blowing weather,
And all her fears were huſhed together:
And now, quoth poor unthinking Ralph,
'Tis over, and the brood is ſafe;
(For ravens, though as birds of omen
They teach both conjurers and old women

To tell us what is to befall,
Can't prophesy themselves at all.)
The morning came, when neighbour Hodge,
Who long had marked her airy lodge,
And destined all the treasure there
A gift to his expecting fair,
Climbed like a squirrel to his dray,
And bore the worthless prize away.

MORAL.

'Tis Providence alone secures
In every change both mine and your's:
Safety consists not in escape
From dangers of a frightful shape;
An earthquake may be bid to spare
The man, that's strangled by a hair.
Fate steals along with silent tread,
Found oftenest in what least we dread,
Frowns in the storm with angry brow,
But in the sunshine strikes the blow.

A COMPARISON.

THE lapſe of time and rivers is the ſame,
Both ſpeed their journey with a reſtleſs ſtream;
The ſilent pace, with which they ſteal away,
No wealth can bribe, no prayers perſuade to ſtay;
Alike irrevocable both when paſt,
And a wide ocean ſwallows both at laſt.
Though each reſemble each in every part,
A difference ſtrikes at length the muſing heart;
Streams never flow in vain; where ſtreams abound,
How laughs the land with various plenty crowned!
But time, that ſhould enrich the nobler mind,
Neglected leaves a dreary waſte behind.

ANOTHER.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

SWEET ſtream, that winds through yonder glade,
Apt emblem of a virtuous maid—
Silent and chaſte ſhe ſteals along,
Far from the world's gay buſy throng;
With gentle yet prevailing force,
Intent upon her deſtined courſe;
Graceful and uſeful all ſhe does,
Bleſſing and bleſt where'er ſhe goes,
Pure-boſomed as that watery glaſs,
And heaven reflected in her face.

THE POET'S NEW-YEAR'S GIFT.

TO MRS. (NOW LADY) THROCKMORTON.

MARIA! I have every good
For thee wiſhed many a time,
Both ſad, and in a cheerful mood,
But never yet in rhime.

To wiſh thee fairer is no need,
More prudent, or more ſprightly,
Or more ingenious, or more freed
From temper-flaws unſightly.

What favour then not yet poſſeſſed
Can I for thee require,
In wedded love already bleſt,
To thy whole heart's deſire?

None here is happy but in part:
Full bliſs is bliſs divine;
There dwells ſome wiſh in every heart,
And doubtleſs one in thine.

That wiſh on ſome fair future day,
Which fate ſhall brightly gild,
('Tis blameleſs, be it what it may)
I wiſh it all fulfilled.

ODE TO APOLLO.

ON AN INK-GLASS ALMOST DRIED IN THE SUN.

PATRON of all thoſe luckleſs brains,
That to the wrong ſide leaning
Indite much metre with much pains,
And little or no meaning.

Ah why, ſince oceans, rivers, ſtreams,
That water all the nations,
Pay tribute to thy glorious beams,
In conſtant exhalations,

Why, ſtooping from the noon of day,
Too covetous of drink,
Apollo, haſt thou ſtolen away
A poet's drop of ink?

Upborne into the viewleſs air
It floats a vapour now,
Impelled through regions denſe and rare,
By all the winds that blow.

Ordained perhaps ere ſummer flies,
  Combined with millions more,
To form an Iris in the ſkies,
  Though black and foul before.

Illuſtrious drop! and happy then
  Beyond the happieſt lot,
Of all that ever paſt my pen,
  So ſoon to be forgot!

Phœbus, if ſuch be thy deſign,
  To place it in thy bow,
Give wit, that what is left may ſhine
  With equal grace below.

PAIRING TIME ANTICIPATED.

A FABLE.

I SHALL not aſk Jean Jaques Rouſſeau,*
If birds confabulate or no;
'Tis clear that they were always able
To hold diſcourſe, at leaſt in fable;
And e'en the child who knows no better,
Than to interpret by the letter,
A ſtory of a cock and bull,
Muſt have a moſt uncommon ſkull.

It chanced then on a winter's day,
But warm, and bright, and calm as May,
The birds, conceiving a deſign
To foreſtall ſweet St. Valentine,
In many an orchard, copſe, and grove,
Aſſembled on affairs of love,
And with much twitter and much chatter,
Began to agitate the matter.

* It was one of the whimſical ſpeculations of this philoſopher, that all fables, which aſcribe reaſon and ſpeech to animals, ſhould be withheld from children, as being only vehicles of deception. But what child was ever deceived by them, or can be, againſt the evidence of his ſenſes?

At length a Bulfinch, who could boaſt
More years and wiſdom than the moſt,
Entreated, opening wide his beak,
A moment's liberty to ſpeak;
And, ſilence publicly enjoined,
Delivered briefly thus his mind.
My friends! be cautious how ye treat
The ſubject, upon which we meet;
I fear we ſhall have winter yet.
A Finch, whoſe tongue knew no controll,
With golden wing, and ſatin pole,
A laſt year's bird, who ne'er had tried
What marriage means, thus pert replied.
Methinks the gentleman, quoth ſhe,
Oppoſite in the apple-tree,
By his good will would keep us ſingle
Till yonder heaven and earth ſhall mingle,
Or (which is likelier to befall)
Till death exterminate us all.
I marry without more ado,
My dear Dick Redcap, what ſay you?
Dick heard, and tweedling, ogling, bridling,
Turning ſhort round, ſtrutting and ſideling,
Atteſted, glad, his approbation
Of an immediate conjugation.

Their ſentiments ſo well expreſſed
Influenced mightily the reſt,
All paired, and each pair built a neſt.
But though the birds were thus in haſte,
The leaves came on not quite ſo faſt,
And deſtiny, that ſometimes bears
An aſpect ſtern on man's affairs,
Not altogether ſmiled on theirs.
The wind, of late breathed gently forth,
Now ſhifted eaſt and eaſt by north;
Bare trees and ſhrubs but ill, you know,
Could ſhelter them from rain or ſnow,
Stepping into their neſts, they paddled,
Themſelves were chilled, their eggs were addled;
Soon every father bird and mother
Grew quarrelſome, and pecked each other,
Parted without the leaſt regret,
Except that they had ever met,
And learned in future to be wiſer,
Than to neglect a good adviſer.

INSTRUCTION.

Miſſes! the tale that I relate
This leſſon ſeems to carry—
Chooſe not alone a proper mate,
But proper time to marry.

THE DOG AND THE WATER-LILY.

NO FABLE.

THE noon was ſhady, and ſoft airs
Swept Ouſe's ſilent tide,
When, 'ſcaped from literary cares,
I wandered on his ſide.

My ſpaniel, prettieſt of his race,
And high in pedigree,
(Two nymphs * adorned with every grace
That ſpaniel found for me)

Now wantoned loſt in flags and reeds,
Now ſtarting into ſight
Purſued the ſwallow o'er the meads
With ſcarce a flower flight.

It was the time when Ouſe diſplayed
His lilies newly blown;
Their beauties I intent ſurveyed,
And one I wiſhed my own.

* Sir Robert Gunning's daughters.

With cane extended far I ſought
To ſteer it cloſe to land;
But ſtill the prize, though nearly caught,
Eſcaped my eager hand.

Beau marked my unſucceſsful pains
With fixt conſiderate face,
And puzzling ſat his puppy brains
To comprehend the caſe.

But with a chirrup clear and ſtrong,
Diſperſing all his dream,
I thence withdrew, and followed long
The windings of the ſtream.

My ramble finiſhed, I returned,
Beau trotting far before
The floating wreath again diſcerned,
And plunging left the ſhore.

I ſaw him with that lily cropped
Impatient ſwim to meet
My quick approach, and ſoon he dropped
The treaſure at my feet.

Charmed with the fight, the world, I cried,
Shall hear of this thy deed:
My dog ſhall mortify the pride
Of man's ſuperior breed:

But chief myſelf I will enjoin,
Awake at duty's call,
To ſhew a love as prompt as thine
To Him who gives me all.

THE POET, THE OYSTER, AND SENSITIVE PLANT.

An Oyſter, caſt upon the ſhore,
Was heard, though never heard before,
Complaining in a ſpeech well worded,
And worthy thus to be recorded—
  Ah, hapleſs wretch! condemned to dwell
For ever in my native ſhell;
Ordained to move when others pleaſe,
Not for my own content or eaſe;
But toſſed and buffeted about,
Now *in* the water and now *out*.
'Twere better to be born a ſtone,
Of ruder ſhape, and feeling none,
Than with a tenderneſs like mine,
And ſenſibilities ſo fine!
I envy that unfeeling ſhrub,
Faſt-rooted againſt every rub.
The plant he meant grew not far off,
And felt the ſneer with ſcorn enough;
Was hurt, diſguſted, mortified,
And with aſperity replied.

When, cry the botanists, and stare,
Did plants called sensitive grow there?
No matter when—a poet's muse is
To make them grow just where she chooses.
You shapeless nothing in a dish,
You that are but almost a fish,
I scorn your coarse insinuation,
And have most plentiful occasion
To wish myself the rock I view,
Or such another dolt as you:
For many a grave and learned clerk,
And many a gay unlettered spark,
With curious touch examines me,
If I can feel as well as he;
And when I bend, retire, and shrink,
Says—Well, 'tis more than one would think!
Thus life is spent (oh fie upon't!)
In being touched, and crying—Don't!
A poet, in his evening walk,
O'erheard and checked this idle talk.
And your fine sense, he said, and your's,
Whatever evil it endures,
Deserves not, if so soon offended,
Much to be pitied or commended.
Disputes, though short, are far too long,
Where both alike are in the wrong;

Your feelings in their full amount,
Are all upon your own account.
You, in your grotto-work encloſed,
Complain of being thus expoſed;
Yet nothing feel in that rough coat,
Save when the knife is at your throat,
Wherever driven by wind or tide,
Exempt from every ill beſide.
And as for you, my Lady Squeamiſh,
Who reckon every touch a blemiſh,
If all the plants, that can be found
Embelliſhing the ſcene around,
Should droop and wither where they grow,
You would not feel at all—not you.
The nobleſt minds their virtue prove
By pity, ſympathy, and love:
Theſe, theſe are feelings truly fine,
And prove their owner half divine.
His cenſure reached them as he dealt it,
And each by ſhrinking ſhowed he felt it.

THE SHRUBBERY.

WRITTEN IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION.

I.

Oh, happy ſhades—to me unbleſt!
Friendly to peace, but not to me!
How ill the ſcene, that offers reſt,
And heart, that cannot reſt, agree!

II.

This glaſſy ſtream, that ſpreading pine,
Thoſe alders quivering to the breeze,
Might ſoothe a ſoul leſs hurt than mine,
And pleaſe, if any thing could pleaſe.

III.

But fixt unalterable care
Foregoes not what ſhe feels within,
Shows the ſame ſadneſs every where,
And ſlights the ſeaſon and the ſcene.

IV.

For all that pleaſed in wood or lawn,
While peace poſſeſſed theſe ſilent bowers,
Her animating ſmile withdrawn,
Has loſt its beauties and its powers.

V.

The faint or moraliſt ſhould tread
This moſs-grown alley muſing, ſlow;
They ſeek like me the ſecret ſhade,
But not like me to nouriſh woe!

VI.

Me fruitful ſcenes and proſpects waſte
Alike admoniſh not to roam;
Theſe tell me of enjoyments paſt,
And thoſe of ſorrows yet to come.

THE WINTER NOSEGAY.

I.

WHAT nature, alas! has denied
To the delicate growth of our iſle,
Art has in a meaſure ſupplied,
And winter is decked with a ſmile.
See, Mary, what beauties I bring
From the ſhelter of that ſunny ſhed,
Where the flowers have the charms of the ſpring,
Though abroad they are frozen and dead.

II.

'Tis a bower of Arcadian ſweets,
Where Flora is ſtill in her prime,
A fortreſs to which ſhe retreats
From the cruel aſſaults of the clime.
While earth wears a mantle of ſnow,
Theſe pinks are as freſh and as gay,
As the faireſt and ſweeteſt, that blow
On the beautiful boſom of May.

III.

See how they have ſafely ſurvived
The frowns of a ſky ſo ſevere;
Such Mary's true love, that has lived
Through many a turbulent year.
The charms of the late blowing roſe
Seem graced with a livelier hue,
And the winter of ſorrow beſt ſhows
The truth of a friend ſuch as you.

MUTUAL FORBEARANCE

NECESSARY TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE MARRIED STATE.

THE lady thus addreſſed her ſpouſe—
What a mere dungeon is this houſe!
By no means large enough; and was it,
Yet this dull room, and that dark cloſet,
Thoſe hangings with their worn-out graces,
Long beards, long noſes, and pale faces,
Are ſuch an antiquated ſcene,
They overwhelm me with the ſpleen.
Sir Humphrey, ſhooting in the dark,
Makes anſwer quite beſide the mark:
No doubt, my dear, I bade him come,
Engaged myſelf to be at home,
And ſhall expect him at the door,
Preciſely when the clock ſtrikes four.
You are ſo deaf, the lady cried,
(And raiſed her voice, and frowned beſide)
You are ſo ſadly deaf, my dear,
What ſhall I do to make you hear?

Diſmiſs poor Harry! he replies;
Some people are more nice than wiſe,
For one ſlight treſpaſs all this ſtir?
What if he did ride whip and ſpur,
'Twas but a mile—your favourite horſe
Will never look one hair the worſe.
Well, I proteſt 'tis paſt all bearing—
Child! I am rather hard of hearing—
Yes, truly—one muſt ſcream and bawl
I tell you, you can't hear at all!
Then, with a voice exceeding low,
No matter if you hear or no.
Alas! and is domeſtic ſtrife,
That ſoreſt ill of human life,
A plague ſo little to be feared,
As to be wantonly incurred,
To gratify a fretful paſſion,
On every trivial provocation?
The kindeſt and the happieſt pair
Will find occaſion to forbear;
And ſomething every day they live,
To pity, and perhaps forgive.
But if infirmities, that fall
In common to the lot of all,
A blemiſh or a ſenſe impaired,
Are crimes ſo little to be ſpared,

Then farewell all, that muſt create
The comfort of the wedded ſtate;
Inſtead of harmony, 'tis jar,
And tumult, and inteſtine war.
The love, that cheers life's lateſt ſtage,
Proof againſt ſickneſs and old age,
Preſerved by virtue from declenſion,
Becomes not weary of attention;
But lives, when that exterior grace,
Which firſt inſpired the flame decays.
'Tis gentle, delicate, and kind,
To faults compaſſionate or blind,
And will with ſympathy endure
Thoſe evils, it would gladly cure:
But angry, coarſe, and harſh expreſſion
Shows love to be a mere profeſſion;
Proves that the heart is none of his,
Or ſoon expels him if it is.

THE

NEGRO'S COMPLAINT.

FORCED from home and all its pleaſures,
Afric's coaſt I left forlorn;
To increaſe a ſtranger's treaſures,
O'er the raging billows borne.
Men from England bought and ſold me,
Paid my price in paltry gold;
But, though theirs they have enrolled me,
Minds are never to be ſold.

Still in thought as free as ever,
What are England's rights, I aſk,
Me from my delights to ſever,
Me to torture, me to taſk?
Fleecy locks and black complexion
Cannot forfeit nature's claim;
Skins may differ, but affection
Dwells in white and black the ſame.

Why did all-creating Nature
Make the plant, for which we toil?
Sighs muſt fan it, tears muſt water,
Sweat of ours muſt dreſs the ſoil.
Think, ye maſters iron-hearted,
Lolling at your jovial boards;
Think how many backs have ſmarted
For the ſweets, your cane affords.

Is there, as ye ſometimes tell us,
Is there one, who reigns on high?
Has he bid you buy and ſell us,
Speaking from his throne the ſky?
Aſk him, if your knotted ſcourges,
Matches, blood-extorting ſcrews,
Are the means, which duty urges
Agents of his will to uſe?

Hark! he anſwers—wild tornadoes,
Strewing yonder ſea with wrecks;
Waſting towns, plantations, meadows,
Are the voice with which he ſpeaks.
He, foreſeeing what vexations
Afric's ſons ſhould undergo,
Fixed their tyrants' habitations
Where his whirlwinds anſwer—no.

By our blood in Afric wafted,
Ere our necks received the chain;
By the miſeries we have taſted,
Croſſing in your barks the main;
By our ſufferings, ſince ye brought us
To the man-degrading mart;
All ſuſtained by patience, taught us
Only by a broken heart.

Deem our nation brutes no longer,
Till ſome reaſon ye ſhall find
Worthier of regard, and ſtronger
Than the colour of our kind.
Slaves of gold, whoſe ſordid dealings
Tarniſh all your boaſted powers,
Prove that you have human feelings,
Ere you proudly queſtion ours!

PITY FOR POOR AFRICANS.

Video meliora proboque,
Deteriora ſequor.—

I own I am ſhocked at the purchaſe of ſlaves,
And fear thoſe, who buy them and ſell them, are knaves;
What I hear of their hardſhips, their tortures, and groans,
Is almoſt enough to draw pity from ſtones.

I pity them greatly, but I muſt be mum,
For how could we do without ſugar and rum?
Eſpecially ſugar, ſo needful we ſee?
What give up our deſerts, our coffee, and tea!

Beſides, if we do, the French, Dutch, and Danes,
Will heartily thank us, no doubt, for our pains;
If we do not buy the poor creatures, they will,
And tortures and groans will be multiplied ſtill.

If foreigners likewiſe would give up the trade,
Much more in behalf of your wiſh might be ſaid;
But, while they get riches by purchaſing blacks,
Pray tell me why we may not alſo go ſnacks?

Your ſcruples and arguments bring to my mind
A ſtory ſo pat, you may think it is coined,
On purpoſe to anſwer you out of my mint;
But I can aſſure you I ſaw it in print.

A youngſter at ſchool more ſedate than the reſt,
Had once his integrity put to the teſt;
His comrades had plotted an orchard to rob,
And aſked him to go and aſſiſt in the job.

He was ſhocked, ſir, like you, and anſwered—"Oh no!
What! rob our good neighbour! I pray you don't go;
Beſides the man's poor, his orchard's his bread,
Then think of his children, for they muſt be fed."

"You ſpeak very fine, and you look very grave,
But apples we want, and apples we'll have;
If you will go with us, you ſhall have a ſhare,
If not, you ſhall have neither apple nor pear."

They ſpoke, and Tom pondered—"I ſee they will go:
Poor man! what a pity to injure him ſo!
Poor man! I would ſave him his fruit if I cou'd,
But ſtaying behind will do him no good.

"If the matter depended alone upon me,
His apples might hang till they dropt from the tree;
But, ſince they will take them, I think I'll go too,
He will loſe none by me, though I get a few."

His ſcruples thus ſilenced, Tom felt more at eaſe,
And went with his comrades the apples to ſeize;
He blamed and proteſted, but joined in the plan:
He ſhared in the plunder, but pitied the man.

THE

MORNING DREAM.

'Twas in the glad ſeaſon of ſpring,
  Aſleep at the dawn of the day,
I dreamed what I cannot but ſing,
  So pleaſant it ſeemed as I lay.
I dreamed that on ocean afloat,
  Far hence to the weſtward I ſailed,
While the billows high-lifted the boat,
  And the freſh-blowing breeze never failed.

In the ſteerage a woman I ſaw,
  Such at leaſt was the form that ſhe wore,
Whoſe beauty impreſſed me with awe,
  Ne'er taught me by woman before.
She ſat, and a ſhield at her ſide
  Shed light, like a ſun on the waves,
And ſmiling divinely, ſhe cried—
  "I go to make Freemen of Slaves."—

Then raiſing her voice to a ſtrain
The ſweeteſt, that ear ever heard,
She ſung of the ſlave's broken chain,
Wherever her glory appeared.
Some clouds, which had over us hung,
Fled, chaſed by her melody clear,
And methought while ſhe liberty ſung,
'Twas liberty only to hear.

Thus ſwiftly dividing the flood,
To a ſlave-cultured iſland we came,
Where a demon, her enemy, ſtood—
Oppreſſion his terrible name.
In his hand, as the ſign of his ſway,
A ſcourge hung with laſhes he bore,
And ſtood looking out for his prey
From Africa's ſorrowful ſhore.

But ſoon as approaching the land,
That goddeſs-like woman he viewed,
The ſcourge he let fall from his hand,
With blood of his ſubjects imbrued.
I ſaw him both ſicken and die,
And the moment the monſter expired,
Heard ſhouts, that aſcended the ſky,
From thouſands with rapture inſpired.

Awaking, how could I but muſe
At what ſuch a dream ſhould betide?
But ſoon my ear caught the glad news,
Which ſerved my weak thought for a guide—
That Britannia, renowned o'er the waves
For the hatred, ſhe ever has ſhown,
To the black-ſceptered rulers of ſlaves,
Reſolves to have none of her own.

THE

NIGHTINGALE AND GLOW-WORM.

A NIGHTINGALE, that all day long
Had cheered the village with his ſong,
Nor yet at eve his note ſuſpended,
Nor yet when eventide was ended,
Began to feel, as well he might,
The keen demands of appetite;
When, looking eagerly around,
He ſpied far off, upon the ground,
A ſomething ſhining in the dark,
And knew the glow-worm by his ſpark;
So, ſtooping down from hawthorn top,
He thought to put him in his crop.
The worm, aware of his intent,
Harangued him thus, right eloquent—
Did you admire my lamp, quoth he,
As much as I your minſtrelſy,
You would abhor to do me wrong,
As much as I to ſpoil your ſong;
For 'twas the ſelf-ſame power divine
Taught you to ſing, and me to ſhine;

That you with muſic, I with light,
Might beautify and cheer the night.
The ſongſter heard his ſhort oration,
And warbling out his approbation,
Releaſed him, as my ſtory tells,
And found a ſupper ſomewhere elſe.
Hence jarring ſectaries may learn
Their real intereſt to diſcern;
That brother ſhould not war with brother,
And worry and devour each other;
But ſing and ſhine by ſweet conſent,
Till life's poor tranſient night is ſpent,
Reſpecting in each other's caſe
The gifts of nature and of grace.
Thoſe Chriſtians beſt deſerve the name,
Who ſtudiouſly make peace their aim;
Peace both the duty and the prize
Of him that creeps and him that flies.

ON A GOLDFINCH

STARVED TO DEATH IN HIS CAGE.

I.

TIME was when I was free as air,
The thiſtles downy ſeed my fare,
My drink the morning dew;
I perched at will on every ſpray,
My form genteel, my plumage gay,
My ſtrains for ever new.

II.

But gaudy plumage, ſprightly ſtrain,
And form genteel, were all in vain,
And of a tranſient date;
For caught and caged, and ſtarved to death,
In dying ſighs my little breath
Soon paſſed the wiry grate.

III.

Thanks, gentle ſwain, for all my woes,
And thanks for this effectual cloſe,
And cure of every ill!
More cruelty could none expreſs;
And I, if you had ſhown me leſs,
Had been your priſoner ſtill.

THE PINE-APPLE AND THE BEE.

THE pine-apples in triple row,
Were baſking hot, and all in blow;
A bee of moſt diſcerning taſte
Perceived the fragrance as he paſſed,
On eager wing the ſpoiler came,
And ſearched for crannies in the frame,
Urged his attempt on every ſide,
To every pane his trunk applied;
But ſtill in vain, the frame was tight,
And only pervious to the light:
Thus having wafted half the day,
He trimmed his flight another way.
Methinks, I ſaid, in thee I find
The ſin and madneſs of mankind.
To joys forbidden man aſpires,
Conſumes his ſoul with vain deſires;
Folly the ſpring of his purſuit,
And diſappointment all the fruit.
While Cynthio ogles, as ſhe paſſes,
The nymph between two chariot glaſſes,
She is the pine-apple, and he
The ſilly unſucceſsful bee.

The maid, who views with penſive air
The ſhow-glaſs fraught with glittering ware,
Sees watches, bracelets, rings, and lockets,
But ſighs at thought of empty pockets;
Like thine, her appetite is keen,
But ah, the cruel glaſs between!
Our dear delights are often ſuch,
Expoſed to view, but not to touch;
The ſight our fooliſh heart inflames,
We long for pine-apples in frames;
With hopeleſs wiſh one looks and lingers;
One breaks the glaſs, and cuts his fingers;
But they whom truth and wiſdom lead,
Can gather honey from a weed.

HORACE. Book the 2d. Ode the 10th.

I.

Receive, dear friend, the truths I teach,
So ſhalt thou live beyond the reach
Of adverſe Fortune's power;
Not always tempt the diſtant deep,
Nor always timorouſly creep
Along the treacherous ſhore.

II.

He, that holds faſt the golden mean,
And lives contentedly between
The little and the great,
Feels not the wants, that pinch the poor,
Nor plagues, that haunt the rich man's door,
Imbittering all his ſtate.

III.

The talleſt pines feel moſt the power
Of wintry blaſts; the loftieſt tower
Comes heavieſt to the ground;
The bolts, that ſpare the mountain's ſide,
His cloud-capt eminence divide,
And ſpread the ruin round.

IV.

The well informed philoſopher
Rejoices with an wholeſome fear,
And hopes, in ſpite of pain;
If winter bellow from the north,
Soon the ſweet ſpring comes dancing forth,
And nature laughs again.

V.

What if thine heaven be overcaſt,
The dark appearance will not laſt;
Expect a brighter ſky.
The God, that ſtrings the ſilver bow,
Awakes ſometimes the muſes too,
And lays his arrows by.

VI.

If hindrances obſtruct thy way,
Thy magnanimity diſplay,
And let thy ſtrength be ſeen;
But oh! if Fortune fill thy ſail
With more than a propitious gale,
Take half thy canvaſs in.

A REFLECTION

ON THE FOREGOING ODE.

And is this all? Can reaſon do no more
Than bid me ſhun the deep, and dread the ſhore?
Sweet moraliſt! afloat on life's rough ſea,
The Chriſtian has an art unknown to thee.
He holds no parley with unmanly fears;
Where duty bids he confidently ſteers,
Faces a thouſand dangers at her call,
And, truſting in his God, ſurmounts them all.

THE LILY AND THE ROSE.

I.

THE nymph muſt loſe her female friend,
If more admired than ſhe—
But where will fierce contention end,
If flowers can diſagree?

II.

Within the garden's peaceful ſcene
Appeared two lovely foes,
Aſpiring to the rank of queen,
The Lily and the Roſe.

III.

The Roſe ſoon reddened into rage,
And, ſwelling with diſdain,
Appealed to many a poet's page
To prove her right to reign.

IV.

The Lily's height beſpoke command,
A fair imperial flower;
She ſeemed deſigned for Flora's hand,
The ſceptre of her power.

V.

This civil bickering and debate
The goddeſs chanced to hear,
And flew to ſave, ere yet too late,
The pride of the parterre;

VI.

Yours is, ſhe ſaid, the nobler hue,
And yours the ſtatelier mien;
And, till a third ſurpaſſes you,
Let each be deemed a queen.

VII.

Thus, ſoothed and reconciled, each ſeeks
The faireſt Britiſh fair.
The ſeat of empire is her cheeks,
They reign united there.

IDEM LATINE REDDITUM.

I.

Heu inimicitias quoties parit æmula forma,
Quam raro pulchræ pulchra placere poteſt ?
Sed fines ultrà ſolitos diſcordia tendit,
Cum flores ipſos bilis et ira movent.

II.

Hortus ubi dulces præbet tacitoſque receſſûs,
Se rapit in partes gens animoſa duas ;
Hic ſibi regales Amaryllis candida cultûs,
Illic purpureo vindicat ore Roſa.

III.

Ira Roſam et meritis quæſita ſuperbia tangunt,
Multaque ferventi vix cohibenda ſinû,
Dum ſibi fautorum ciet undique nomina vatûm,
Juſque ſuum, multo carmine fulta, probat.

IV.

Altior emicat illa, et celſo vertice nutat,
Ceu flores inter non habitura parem,
Faſtiditque alios, et nata videtur in uſûs
Imperii, ſceptrum, Flora quod ipſa gerat.

V.

Nec Dea non ſenſit civilis murmura rixæ,
Cui curæ eſt pictas pandere ruris opes.
Deliciaſque ſuas nunquam non prompta tueri,
Dum licet et locus eſt, ut tueatur, adeſt.

VI.

Et tibi forma datur procerior omnibus, inquit,
Et tibi, principibus qui ſolet eſſe, color,
Et donec vincat quædam formoſior ambas,
Et tibi reginæ nomen, et eſto tibi.

VII.

His ubi ſedatus furor eſt, petit utraque nympham,
Qualem inter Veneres Anglia ſola parit;
Hanc penés imperium eſt, nihil optant amplius, hujus
Regnant in nitidis, et ſine lite, genis.

THE POPLAR FIELD.

THE poplars are felled, farewell to the ſhade,
And the whiſpering ſound of the cool colonade;
The winds play no longer and ſing in the leaves,
Nor Ouſe on his boſom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapſed, ſince I laſt took a view
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew;
And now in the graſs behold they are laid
And the tree is my ſeat, that once lent me a ſhade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
Where the hazels afford him a ſcreen from the heat,
And the ſcene, where his melody charmed me before,
Reſounds with his ſweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hafting away,
And I muſt ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breaſt, and a ſtone at my head,
Ere another ſuch grove ſhall ariſe in its ſtead.

'Tis a ſight to engage me, if any thing can,
To muſe on the periſhing pleaſures of man;
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I ſee,
Have a being leſs durable even than he *.

* Mr. Cowper afterwards altered this laſt ſtanza in the following manner:—

The change both my heart and my fancy employs,
I reflect on the frailty of man, and his joys;
Short-lived as we are, yet our pleaſures, we ſee,
Have a ſtill ſhorter date, and die ſooner than we.

IDEM LATINE REDDITUM.

Populeæ cecidit gratiſſima copia ſilvæ,
Conticuêre ſuſurri, omniſque evanuit umbra.
Nullæ jam levibus ſe miſcent frondibus auræ,
Et nulla in fluvio ramorum ludit imago.

Hei mihi! bis ſenos dum luctû torqueor annos
His cogor ſilvis ſuetoque carere receſſu,
Cum ſerò rediens, ſtrataſque in gramine cernens
Inſedi arboribus, ſub queîs errare ſolebam.

Ah ubi nunc merulæ cantus? Felicior illum
Silva tegit, duræ nondum permiſſa bipenni;
Scilicet exuſtos colles campoſque patentes
Odit, et indignans et non rediturus abivit.

Sed qui ſucciſas doleo ſuccidar et ipſe,
Et priùs huic parilis quàm creverit altera ſilva
Flebor, et, exequiis parvis donatus, habebo
Defixum lapidem tumulique cubantis acervum.

Tam ſubitò periiſſe videns tam digna manere,
Agnoſco humanas ſortes et triſtia fata—
Sit licàt ipſe brevis, volucrique ſimillimus umbræ,
Eſt homini brevior citiùſque obitura voluptas.

VOTUM.

O MATUTINI rores, auræque ſalubres,
O nemora, et lætæ rivis felicibus herbæ,
Graminei colles, et amænæ in vallibus umbræ!
Fata modò dederint quas olim in rure paterno
Delicias, procul arte, procul formidine novi,
Quam vellem ignotus, quod mens mea ſemper avebat,
Ante larem proprium placidam expectare ſenectam,
Tum demùm, exactis non infeliciter annis,
Sortiri tacitum lapidem, aut ſub ceſpite condi!

CICINDELA.

BY VINCENT BOURNE.

Sub ſepe exiguum eſt, nec rarò in margine ripæ,
  Reptile, quod lucet nocte, dieque latet,
Vermis habet ſpeciem, ſed habet de lumine Nomên;
  At priſcâ à famâ non liquet, unde micet.
Plerique à caudâ credunt procedere lumen;
  Nec deſunt, credunt qui rutilare caput.
Nam ſuperas ſtellas quæ nox accendit, et illi
  Parcam eadem Lucem dat, moduloque parem.
Forſitan hoc prudens voluit Natura caveri,
  Ne pede quis duro reptile contereret.
Exiguam, in tenebris ne greſſum offenderet ullus,
  Prætendi voluit forſitan Illa facem.
Sive uſum hunc Natura parens, ſeu maluit illum,
  Haud fruſtra accenſa eſt Lux, radiique dati.
Ponite vos faſtus, humiles nec ſpernite, magni;
  Quando habet et minimum reptile, quod niteat.

I. THE GLOW-WORM.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

I.

Beneath the hedge, or near the ſtream,
A worm is known to ſtray;
That ſhows by night a lucid beam,
Which diſappears by day.

II.

Diſputes have been, and ſtill prevail,
From whence his rays proceed;
Some give that honour to his tail,
And others to his head.

III.

But this is ſure—the hand of might,
That kindles up the ſkies,
Gives *him* a modicum of light
Proportioned to his ſize.

IV.

Perhaps indulgent nature meant,
By ſuch a lamp beſtowed,
To bid the traveller, as he went,
Be careful where he trod:

V.

Nor cruſh a worm, whoſe uſeful light
Might ſerve, however ſmall,
To ſhew a ſtumbling ſtone by night,
And ſave him from a fall.

VI.

Whate'er ſhe meant, this truth divine
Is legible and plain,
'Tis power almighty bids him ſhine,
Nor bids him ſhine in vain.

VII.

Ye proud and wealthy, let this theme
Teach humbler thoughts to you,
Since ſuch a reptile has its gem,
And boaſts its ſplendour too.

CORNICULA.

BY VINCENT BOURNE.

Nigras inter aves avis eſt, quæ plurima turres,
Antiquas ædes, celſaque Fana colit.
Nil tam ſublime eſt, quod non audace volatu,
Aeriis ſpernens inferiora, petit.
Quo nemo aſcendat, cui non vertigo cerebrum
Corripiat, certè hunc ſeligit illa locum.
Quo vix à terrâ tu ſuſpicis abſque tremore,
Illa metûs expers incolumiſque ſedet.
Lamina delubri ſupra faſtigia, ventus
Quâ cœli ſpiret de regione, docet;
Hanc ea præ reliquis mavult, ſecura periclî,
Nec curat, nedum cogitat, unde cadat.
Res inde humanas, ſed ſumma per otia, ſpecta,
Et nihil ad ſeſe, quas videt, eſſe videt.
Concurſus ſpectat, plateâque negotia in omni,
Omnia pro nugis at ſapienter habet.
Clamores, quas infra audit, ſi forſitan audit,
Pro rebus nihili negligit, & crocitat.
Ille tibi invideat, felix Cornicula, pennas,
Qui ſic humanis rebus abeſſe velit.

II. THE JACKDAW.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

I.

THERE is a bird who by his coat,
And by the hoarſeneſs of his note,
Might be ſuppoſed a crow;
A great frequenter of the church,
Where biſhop-like he finds a perch,
And dormitory too.

II.

Above the ſteeple ſhines a plate,
That turns and turns, to indicate
From what point blows the weather.
Look up—your brains begin to ſwim,
'Tis in the clouds—that pleaſes him,
He chooſes it the rather.

III.

Fond of the ſpeculative height,
Thither he wings his airy flight,
And thence ſecurely ſees
The buſtle and the taree-ſhow,
That occupy mankind below,
Secure and at his eaſe.

IV.

You think, no doubt, he ſits and muſes
On future broken bones and bruiſes,
If he ſhould chance to fall.
No; not a ſingle thought like that
Employs his philoſophic pate,
Or troubles it at all.

V.

He ſees that this great roundabout
The world, with all its motley rout,
Church, army, phyſic, law,
Its cuſtoms, and its buſineſſes,
Is no concern at all of his,
And ſays—what ſays he?—Caw.

VI.

Thrice happy bird! I too have ſeen
Much of the vanities of men;
And, ſick of having ſeen 'em,
Would cheerfully theſe limbs reſign
For ſuch a pair of wings as thine,
And ſuch a head between 'em.

AD GRILLUM

ANACREONTICUM.

BY VINCENT BOURNE.

I.

O qui meæ culinæ
Argutulus Choraules,
Et Hoſpes es canorus,
Quacunque commoreris,
Felicitatis omen;
Jucundiore cantu
Siquando me ſalutes,
Et ipſe te rependam,
Et ipſe, quâ valebo,
Remunerabo muſâ.

II.

Dicêris innocenſque
Et gratus inquilinus;
Nec victitans rapinis,
Ut ſorices voraces,
Mureſve curioſi,
Furumque delicatum
Vulgus domeſticorum;
Sed tutus in camini
Receſſibus, quiete
Contentus & calore.

III.

Beatior Cicadâ,
Quæ te referre formâ,
Quæ voce te videtur;
Et ſaltitans per herbas,
Unius, haud ſecundæ,
Æſtatis eſt Choriſta:
Tu carmen integratum
Reponis ad Decembrem,
Lætus per univerſum
Incontinenter annum.

IV.

Te nulla Lux relinquit,
Te nulla nox reviſit,
Non Muſicæ vacantem,
Curiſve non ſolutum:
Quin amplies canendo,
Quin amplies fruendo,
Ætatulam, vel omni,
Quam nos Homunciones
Abſumimus querendo,
Ætate longiorem.

III. THE CRICKET.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

I.

Little inmate, full of mirth,
Chirping on my kitchen hearth,
Wherefoe'er be thine abode,
Always harbinger of good,
Pay me for thy warm retreat
With a ſong more ſoft and ſweet;
In return thou ſhalt receive
Such a ſtrain as I can give.

II.

Thus thy praiſe ſhall be expreſt,
Inoffenſive, welcome gueſt!
While the rat is on the ſcout,
And the mouſe with curious ſnout,
With what vermin elſe infeſt
Every diſh, and ſpoil the beſt;
Friſking thus before the fire,
Thou haſt all thine heart's deſire.

III.

Though in voice and ſhape they be
Formed as if akin to thee,
Thou ſurpaſſeſt, happier far,
Happieſt graſshoppers that are;
Theirs is but a ſummer's ſong,
Thine endures the winter long,
Unimpaired, and ſhrill, and clear,
Melody throughout the year.

IV.

Neither night, nor dawn of day,
Puts a period to thy play:
Sing then—and extend thy ſpan
Far beyond the date of man.
Wretched man, whoſe years are ſpent
In repining diſcontent,
Lives not, aged though he be,
Half a ſpan, compared with thee.

SIMILE AGIT IN SIMILE.

BY VINCENT BOURNE.

Chriſtatus, pictiſque ad Thaida Pſittacus alis,
Miſſus ab Eoo munus amante venit.
Ancillis mandat primam formare loquelam,
Archididaſcaliæ dat ſibi Thais opus.
Pſittace, ait Thais, fingitque ſonantia molle
Baſia, quæ docilis molle refingit Avis.
Jam captat, jam dimidiat Tyrunculus; & jam
Integrat auditos articulatque ſonos.
Pſittace mi pulcher pulchelle, Hera dicit alumno;
Pſittace mi pulcher, reddit alumnus Heræ.
Jamque canit, ridet, decieſque ægrotat in horâ,
Et vocat ancillas nomine quamque ſuo.
Multaque ſcurratur mendax, & multa jocatur,
Et lepido populum detinet augurio.
Nunc tremulum illudet Fratrem, qui ſuſpicit, & Pol!
Carnalis, quiſquis te docet, inquit, Homo eſt;
Argutæ nunc ſtridet anûs argutulus inſtar;
Reſpicit, & nebulo es, quiſquis es, inquis Anus.
Quando fuit melior Tyro, meliorve Magiſtra!
Quando duo ingeniis tam coiere pares!
Ardua diſcenti nulla eſt, res nulla docenti
Ardua; cum doceat Fœmina, diſcat Avis.

IV. THE PARROT.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

I.

In painted plumes ſuperbly dreſt,
A native of the gorgeous eaſt,
By many a billow toſt;
Poll gains at length the Britiſh ſhore,
Part of the captain's precious ſtore,
A preſent to his toaſt.

II.

Belinda's maids are ſoon preferred
To teach him now and then a word,
As Poll can maſter it;
But 'tis her own important charge
To qualify him more at large,
And make him quite a wit.

III.

Sweet Poll! his doating miſtreſs cries,
Sweet Poll! the mimic bird replies;
And calls aloud for ſack.
She next inſtructs him in the kiſs;
'Tis now a little one, like Miſs,
And now a hearty ſmack.

IV.

At firſt he aims at what he hears;
And, liſtening cloſe with both his ears,
Juſt catches at the ſound;
But ſoon articulates aloud,
Much to the amuſement of the crowd,
And ſtuns the neighbours round.

V.

A querulous old woman's voice
His humorous talent next employs,
He ſcolds and gives the lie.
And now he ſings, and now is ſick,
Here Sally, Suſan, come, come quick,
Poor Poll is like to die!

VI.

Belinda and her bird! 'tis rare
To meet with ſuch a well matched pair,
The language and the tone,
Each character in every part
Suſtained with ſo much grace and art,
And both in uniſon.

VII.

When children firſt begin to ſpell,
And ſtammer out a ſyllable,
We think them tedious creatures;

But difficulties soon abate,
When birds are to be taught to prate,
And women are the teachers.

TRANSLATION OF PRIOR'S CHLOE AND EUPHELIA.

I.

MERCATOR, vigiles oculos ut fallere poſſit,
Nomine ſub fićto trans mare mittit opes;
Lené ſonat liquidumque meis Euphelia chordis,
Sed ſolam exoptant te, mea vota, Chlöe.

II.

Ad ſpeculum ornabat nitidos Euphelia crines,
Cum dixit mea lux, heus, cane, fume lyram.
Namque lyram juxtà poſitam cum carmine vidit,
Suave quidem carmen dulciſonamquê lyram,

III.

Fila lyræ vocemque paro, ſuſpiria ſurgunt,
Et miſcent numeris murmura mæſta meis,
Dumque tuæ memoro laudes, Euphelia, formæ,
Tota anima intereà pendet ab ore Chlöes.

IV.

Subrubet illa pudore, et contrahit altera frontem,
Me torquet mea mens conſcia, pſallo, tremo;
Atque Cupidineâ dixit Dea cinćta corona,
Heu! fallendi artem quam didicere parum.

THE

DIVERTING HISTORY

OF

JOHN GILPIN;

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN INTENDED, AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN.

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A train-band captain eke was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's ſpouſe ſaid to her dear,
Though wedded we have been
Theſe twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have ſeen.

To-morrow is our wedding day,
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton
All in a chaiſe and pair.

My ſiſter, and my ſiſter's child,
Myſelf, and children three,
Will fill the chaiſe; ſo you muſt ride
On horſeback after we.

He ſoon replied, I do admire
Of womankind but one,
And you are ſhe, my deareſt dear,
Therefore it ſhall be done.

I am a linen-draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender
Will lend his horſe to go.

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin, That's well ſaid;
And for that wine is dear,
We will be furniſhed with our own,
Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kiſſed his loving wife;
O'erjoyed was he to find
That, though on pleaſure ſhe was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaiſe was brought,
But yet was not allowed
To drive up to the door, left all
Should ſay that ſhe was proud.

So three doors off the chaiſe was ſtayed,
Where they did all get in;
Six precious ſouls, and all agog
To daſh through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
Were never folk ſo glad,
The ſtones did rattle underneath
As if Cheapſide were mad.

John Gilpin at his horſe's ſide
Seized faſt the flowing mane,
And up he got, in haſte to ride,
But ſoon came down again;

For ſaddle-tree ſcarce reached had he,
His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he ſaw
Three cuſtomers come in.

So down he came; for loſs of time,
Although it grieved him ſore;
Yet loſs of pence, full well he knew,
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the cuſtomers
Were ſuited to their mind,
When Betty ſcreaming came down ſtairs,
"The wine is left behind!"

Good lack! quoth he—yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewiſe,
In which I bear my truſty ſword
When I do exerciſe.

Now miſtreſs Gilpin (careful ſoul!)
Had two ſtone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that ſhe loved,
And keep it ſafe and ſound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each ſide,
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipped from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well bruſhed and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now ſee him mounted once again
Upon his nimble ſteed,
Full ſlowly pacing o'er the ſtones,
With caution and good heed.

But finding ſoon a ſmoother road
Beneath his well-ſhod feet,
The ſnorting beaſt began to trot,
Which galled him in his ſeat.

So, Fair and ſoftly, John he cried,
But John he cried in vain;
That trot became a gallop ſoon,
In ſpite of curb and rein.

So ſtooping down, as needs he muſt
Who cannot ſit upright,
He graſped the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horſe, who never in that ſort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought;
Away went hat and wig;
He little dreamt when he ſet out,
Of running ſuch a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like ſtreamer long and gay,
Till, loop and button failing both,
At laſt it flew away.

Then might all people well diſcern
The bottles he had ſlung;
A bottle ſwinging at each ſide,
As hath been ſaid or ſung.

The dogs did bark, the children ſcreamed,
Up flew the windows all;
And every ſoul cried out, Well done!
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he?
His fame ſoon ſpread around,
He carries weight! he rides a race!
'Tis for a thouſand pound!

And ſtill, as faſt as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view
How in a trice the turnpike men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were ſhattered at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Moſt piteous to be ſeen,
Which made his horſe's flanks to ſmoke
As they had baſted been.

But ſtill he ſeemed to carry weight,
With leathern girdle braced;
For all might ſee the bottle-necks
Still dangling at his waiſt.

Thus all through merry Iſlington
Theſe gambols he did play,
Until he came unto the Waſh
Of Edmonton ſo gay,

And there he threw the waſh about
On both ſides of the way,
Juſt like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild gooſe at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony ſpied
Her tender huſband, wondering much
To ſee how he did ride.

Stop, ſtop, John Gilpin!—Here's the houſe—
They all at once did cry;
The dinner waits, and we are tired:
Said Gilpin—So am I!

But yet his horſe was not a whit
Inclined to tarry there;
For why?—his owner had a houſe
Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow ſwift he flew,
Shot by an archer ſtrong;
So did he fly—which brings me to
The middle of my ſong.

Away went Gilpin out of breath,
And ſore againſt his will,
Till at his friend the calender's
His horſe at laſt ſtood ſtill.

The calender, amazed to ſee
His neighbour in ſuch trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accoſted him.

What news? what news? your tidings tell;
Tell me you muſt and ſhall—
Say why bare-headed you are come,
Or why you come at all?

Now Gilpin had a pleaſant wit,
And loved a timely joke!
And thus unto the calender
In merry guiſe he ſpoke:

I came becauſe your horſe would come;
And, if I well forebode,
My hat and wig will ſoon be here,
They are upon the road.

The calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Returned him not a ſingle word,
But to the houſe went in;

Whence ſtraight he came with hat and wig;
A wig that flowed behind,
A hat not much the worſe for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn
Thus ſhowed his ready wit,
My head is twice as big as your's
They therefore needs muſt fit.

But let me ſcrape the dirt away,
That hangs upon your face;
And ſtop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry caſe.

Said John, it is my wedding-day,
And all the world would ſtare
If wife ſhould dine at Edmonton,
And I ſhould dine at Ware.

So turning to his horſe, he ſaid,
I am in haſte to dine;
'Twas for your pleaſure you came here,
You ſhall go back for mine.

Ah luckleſs ſpeech, and bootleſs boaſt!
For which he paid full dear;
For, while he ſpake, a braying aſs
Did ſing moſt loud and clear;

Whereat his horſe did ſnort, as he
Had heard a lion roar,
And galloped off with all his might,
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig.
He loſt them ſooner than at firſt,
For why?—they were too big.

Now miſtreſs Gilpin, when ſhe ſaw
Her huſband poſting down
Into the country far away,
She pulled out half a crown;

And thus unto the youth ſhe ſaid,
That drove them to the Bell,
This ſhall be your's when you bring back
My huſband ſafe and well.

The youth did ride, and ſoon did meet
John coming back amain;
Whom in a trice he tried to ſtop,
By catching at his rein;

But not performing what he meant,
And gladly would have done,
The frighted ſteed he frighted more,
And made him faſter run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went poſt-boy at his heels,
The poſt-boy's hórſe right glad to miſs
The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road
Thus ſeeing Gilpin fly,
With poſt-boy ſcampering in the rear,
They raiſed the hue and cry:—

Stop thief! ſtop thief!—a highwayman!
Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that paſſed that way
Did join in the purſuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
Flew open in ſhort ſpace;
The toll-men thinking as before
That Gilpin rode a race.

And ſo he did, and won it too,
For he got firſt to town;
Nor ſtopped till where he had got up
He did again get down.

Now let us ſing, long live the king,
And Gilpin long live he;
And, when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to ſee!

TO

THE REV. W. CAWTHORNE UNWIN.

I.

UNWIN, I ſhould but ill repay
The kindneſs of a friend,
Whoſe worth deſerves as warm a lay,
As ever friendſhip penned,
Thy name omitted in a page,
That would reclaim a vicious age.

II.

An union formed, as mine with thee,
Not raſhly, or in ſport,
May be as fervent in degree,
And faithful in its ſort,
And may as rich in comfort prove,
As that of true fraternal love.

III.

The bud inſerted in the rind,
The bud of peach or roſe,
Adorns, though differing in its kind,
The ſtock whereon it grows,
With flower as ſweet, or fruit as fair,
As if produced by nature there.

IV.

Not rich, I render what I may,
I ſeize thy name in haſte,
And place it in this firſt eſſay,
Left this ſhould prove the laſt.
'Tis where it ſhould be—in a plan,
That holds in view the good of man.

V.

The poet's lyre, to fix his fame,
Should be the poet's heart;
Affection lights a brighter flame
Than ever blazed by art.
No muſes on theſe lines attend,
I ſink the poet in the friend.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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